THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF TĒVĀRAM

BOOK II

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M. A. DORAI RANGASWAMY

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GENERAL EDITOR :

Dr. R. P. SETHU PILLAI, B.A., B.L., D.Litt.
Professor of Tamil, University of Madras

THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF TEVĀRAM

BOOK II (VOLUMES III & IV)

THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF TĒVĀRAM

With special reference to Nampi Ārūrar (Sundarar)

IN FOUR VOLUMES

BY

DR. M. A. DORAI RANGASWAMY, M.A., M.O.L., PH.D.
University Professor of Tamil, (Madurai)

BOOK II (VOLUMES III & IV)

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1959

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DEDICATED TO

Lt.-Col. Diwan Bahadur Sir A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR, Kt., M.D., LL.D., D.Sc., D.C.L., D.Litt., F.R.C.O.G., F.A C.S., M.L.C., Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras.

FOREWORD

Dr. M. A. Dorai Rangaswamy, Reader in Tamil, University of Madras, was engaged for many years in the study of the sacred Tēvāram hymns of the Śaiva Saints in general and those of one of them, Nampi Ārūrar, popularly known as Sundarar in particular, from various points of view. The present work embodies his research in this field. A part of this work was submitted as a thesis for the Ph.D. Degree of this University and was approved.

The University has sanctioned the printing of the whole work in two Books. The first part of Book I was published on the 71st birthday (20-1-57) of the illustrious Vice-Chancellor of this University and dedicated to him.

The Author's introduction elaborately explains the scheme and significance of the work. It is hoped that this pioneer work will be followed by many more Studies, throwing further light on this important and interesting period of Tamil history and culture.

University of Madras,
15-8-1958.

R. P. SETHU PILLAI,
Professor of Tamil.

PREFACE

"The Tamilians poured forth their intense love in their *hymns, Tēvāram* and *Nālāyiram,* the like of which is seen in no other language. Monotheism with all its moral grandeur shines ever resplendent in the Semitic languages. Law is the very breath of the Imperial Latin language. The Greek language is the embodiment of Art. The modern languages, the French, the German and the English march triumphantly along with the progress of Science. Philosophy is beautifully enshrined in the Sanskrit language. For a study of these higher aspects of life, one has necessarily to go to these languages. In a similar way one has to go to Tamil which stands supreme with its God-intoxicating and bone-melting *hymns* of intense love and light expressed in mellifluous numbers of exquisite beauty".*

If this is true, the study of the sacred *hymns* of the *Śaivites* known as *Tēvāram* becomes of paramount interest. *Śaivism* has its best exposition as a living faith in these *hymns.*

The present work deals with the poems of *Nampi Ārūrar,* popularly known as *Sundarar* (*Cuntarar*), the last of the three *Tēvāram* Saints, who modestly states that his verses repeat only the ideas of his predecessors *Campantar* and *Tirunāvukkaracar* (*Appar*), a statement which we may translate as meaning that his *hymns* are the very quintessence of the other two great *Tēvāram* poets. *Nampi Ārūrar's* poems serve as a key to unlock the hidden treasures of *Tēvāram.*

The Religion and philosophy of *Nampi Ārūrar,* as the message of this poet, have a greater value than any other aspect of his verses. But according to tradition his life itself is an expression of a great message. This necessitates a study of his life and fixing of his age. The verses sung by this poet being the main source of our study, the question of the number of verses sung by him

Some Key words in Tamil Culture by Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaram.

has to be answered. The name *Tēvāram* itself requires elucidation as well as the question of the age when this term came into use. The name *Sundarar* (*Cuntarar*) by which this poet is commonly known in modern times creates a problem, because it is not found in earlier works.

There is again the question of the mythology of *Ārūrar's* age. For a correct understanding of our poet's references to mythology, apart from the *Āgamas* and the *Purāṇas,* we have to search for some concrete representation of these stories. The phrase *"Vīraṭṭāṉam"* occurring in *Tēvāram* shows us a way of grouping all the stories around that conception. The sculptures of *Kailāsanātha* Temple at *Kāñci* which belong to the age of *Ārūrar* according to the present writer, have to be studied with reference to the mythological allusions found in his own *hymns.* When it is remembered that *Ārūrar's* language of mythology is one way of expressing his message, the importance of this study becomes clear.

All these are in one sense a study of the objective life of the poet. Philosophy as the spiritual message of the poet should be the crown of his inner personality or spiritual development. The verses have to be chronologically arranged so as to reveal to one the progress of his spiritual life. This requires a study of these verses from this point of view.

It is on the basis of these preliminary investigations that a study of the Religion and Philosophy of *Ārūrar* is attempted in the present work. All these points have not been discussed and solved in any previous essay or work though the present writer has received guidance from other authors whose writings he has quoted in several places.

In studying the Religion of *Ārūrar,* the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai,* a *hymn* giving the list of saints who appealed *Ārūrar* is considered by the present writer to be of great importance. The *hymn,* so to say gives a concrete picture of the Religion, our poet admired and revered. This *hymn* and the lives of the saints mentioned therein are studied so as to arrive at a conclusion about the extent of these stories which could have been in the mind of our poet. *Periyapurāṇam,* Inscriptions, other literary works in *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* and the representations of the lives of these saints in the famous *Dārāsuram* temple and elsewhere are brought together,

probably for the first time to throw a flood of light on the references to these saints in the very poem of *Tēvāram* writers. The penultimate verse in that *hymn* is held as giving us a convenient and important classification of these saints and the conclusion is further verified by other classifications, if one may use that word found in the other *hymns* of *Ārūrar.* The nationalism of this *hymn* is emphasized in this essay as also our poet's love of Tamil as the very form of the Lord, and the implications of this outlook are explained. *Ārūrar's* theory of *mantra* and of the language of worship come in for study. This nationalism is next shown to be but a stepping stone for the universal outlook of our poet. This raises the question of the unhappy reference to other sects and it is shown here that these references do not run counter to our theory of *Ārūrar's* universalism. The details of worship have been interpreted and explained in terms of the *Āgamas,* as all leading to a mystic experience of the Absolute.

Coming to the study of the Philosophy of this poet, his conception of Nature, Soul and God has been discussed from the point of view of mysticism. The importance of "*Akattiṇai*" poems or poems of bridal love, has been attempted to be brought out. The ethical point of view is also explained, as also the final goal of spiritual life as contemplated by our poet. To some it may be a disappointment that we could not label this poet as belonging to any particular creed or dogma. But the trend of the poems as studied by us leads us to only one conclusion that our poet was a mystic whose experience avoids all conflicts by its harmony.

The present writer does not remember that the subject has been approached from this point of view before, and he claims all the approaches and conclusions referred to above as his original contributions, subject to the sources which he has used and which he has acknowledged.

The Author is extremely thankful to all those* who offered their suggestions when preparing this work, *viz.,* "The Religion and Philosophy of *Tēvāram* with special reference to *Sundarar*", and he offers his special thanks to the members of the Syndicate for having sanctioned the printing of the whole of his research work in four volumes.

* Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai, Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan, Thiru. V. S. Chengelvaraya Pillai, Thiru. S. Somasundaram Pillai, Dr. V. Raghavan and Sri S. Subrahmanya Sastri.

The first volume *viz.*, "*Nampi Ārūrar's Tēvāram*, His life and Age" was published and dedicated to the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University on the day of his 71st birthday celebrations in January 1957.

After the second volume was printed, both the first and the second volumes were together published as Book I in August, 1958.

Now, volumes three and four are published as Book II of which volume four was submitted as a thesis for the Ph.D. Degree of this University in 1956 and was approved.

The subsequent volumes are also dedicated to the Vice-Chancellor.

The Author is thankful to the Vice-Chancellor for his having accepted the dedication and to the Professor of Tamil for his ready help and encouragement at all times and for his Foreword.

25th July, 1959,
Madras.

M. A. DORAI RANGASWAMY
University Professor of Tamil, (Madurai).

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

அ	a	உ	u	ஐ	ai
ஆ	ā	ஊ	ū	ஒ	o
இ	i	எ	e	ஓ	ō
ஈ	ī	ஏ	ē	ஔ	au
		ஃ	ḵ		
க்	k	த்	t	ல்	l
ங்	ṅ	ந்	n	வ்	v
ச்	c	ப்	p	ழ்	ḻ
ஞ்	ñ	ம்	m	ள்	ḷ
ட்	ṭ	ய்	y	ற்	ṟ
ண்	ṇ	ர்	r	ன்	ṉ
ஜ்	j	ஸ்	s	ஹ்	h
ஶ்	ś	ஷ்	ṣ	க்ஷ்	kṣ

Method of citing Authorities

Numbers in poetical works refer to the verses; when two numbers are used, the first denotes the *hymn* or *chapter* or *'kātai'*, and the second, the verse or line in it; when three numbers are used, the first denotes the *Tirumuṟai,* the second the *hymn,* and the third the verse. For example, *Tol.* 55 means, *Tolkāppiyam* verse or *cūtram* 55; Campantar 125: 3 means *Campantar Tēvāram hymn* 125, verse 3; Campantar 1: 15: 9 means Campantar Tēvāṟam *Tirumuṟai* 1, *hymn* 15 and *verse* 9. Mere numbers such as 65: 2 will mean only *Ārūrar's Tēvāram, hymn* 65 and verse 2.

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VOLUME III

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS
OR
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ĀRŪRAR'S MYSTICISM
AS GATHERED FROM
A DETAILED STUDY OF HIS HYMNS

GENERAL
INTRODUCTION

I

Elsewhere,[1] the life of *Ārūrar* had been studied. *Cēkkiḻār's* version, which is based upon tradition and internal evidence of the verses of *Ārūrar,* had been our basis. But there, though reference had been made to the mystic experiences of *Ārūrar,* the emphasis was mainly on the objective life. What is much more important and interesting to a student of poetry, religion and philosophy is the inner life of the poet, the development of his mind, unfolding and blossoming of his mysticism. The *hymns* sung by him are the expressions of the inner experience.

II

It is advisable to study the *hymns* in groups; for, it is not easy for our mind to take all the *hymns* in one sweep, though at the end we must attempt at getting a complete and unified picture of all the *hymns* as an organic whole revealing the march of our poet's life. The *hymns* may, therefore, be grouped chronologically according to the various pilgrimages of the poet. Here the scheme of the arrangement of the *hymns* may be studied with the help of *Cēkkiḻār.*

III

The seventh *Tirumuṟai,* which consists of *Ārūrar's hymns* has been arranged *'Paṇvār'* — according to the *Paṇs* or Melody types.

1 *Vol. 1.*

The first twelve *hymns* are in *'Intoḷam Paṇ'*; the next four are in *'Takkarāgam'*; the fourteen that follow are in *'Naṭṭarāgam'*; the next seven are in *'Kolli'*; the nine *hymns* that succeed are in *'Kollikkauvāṇam'*; the seven *hymns* that follow are in *'Paḻampañcuram'*; the next seventeen are in *'Takkēci'*; the next five are in *'Kāntāram'*; the next one is in *'Piyantaik kāntāram'*; the next one is in *'Kāntāra pañcamam'*; the five *hymns* that succeed are in *'Naṭṭapāṭai'*; the three that come next are in *'Puṟanīrmai;* the next four are in *'Cīkāmaram'*; the next four are in *'Kuṟiñci'*, with the one following them in *'Kaucikam'* and another after it in *'Centuritti'* and the last five in *'Pañcamam'*. In all, there are seventeen *Paṇs*. The Tiruppaṉantāḷ edition and a few other editions separate 'the *Tirucculiyal'* *hymn*[2] from the *Naṭṭapāṭai* one and give it under *Naṭṭarāgam'*, a tune which comes as the third in the above order.

The *'Paṇ'* is the *rāgam*, but the same *rāgams* may be sung on various *'tāḷas'* or time scales. If these different time scales are taken into consideration, the *hymns* sung in the same *rāgam* may have various musical forms or *'Kaṭṭaḷais'* and the *Tirumuṟai Kaṇṭa Purāṇam*[3] distinguishes a few varieties in each of these *paṇs* or *rāgas* as may be seen from the following table :

1.	*Intaḷam*	2	9.	*Naṭṭapāṭai*	2
2.	*Takkarāgam*	2	10.	*Puṟanīrmai*	2
3.	*Naṭṭarāgam*	2	11.	*Kāmaram*	1
4.	*Kolli*	2	12.	*Kuṟiñci*	2
5.	*Paḻampañcuram*	2	13.	*Centurrutti*	1
6.	*Takkēci*	6	14.	*Kaucikam*	22
7.	*Kāntāram*	2	15.	*Pañcamam*	1
8.	*Kāntārapañcamam*	2			

It will be seen that *Kollikkauvāṇam* is omitted in the above list. Pobably it is included under *Kolli. Piyantaikkāntīram* also is omitted, whereas in enumerating the *kaṭṭaḷais* for *Ārūrar's hymns,* this *purāṇam* speaks of *'Kāntāramākiya piyantaiyām kaṭṭaḷai'*.[4] Therefore, the *Piyantaikkāntāram* should be included under *Kāntāram.* But in the statement in the *Purāṇam, 'Takkēcip*

2. 7:82.
3. SS. 40-43.
4. *S.* 37.

pēricai yāṟākki atil kāntāram pirittu iranṭām';[5] how *Kāntaram* becomes an integral part of *Takkēci* is not clear. Lastly, there is only one *hymn* in *Kaucikam* while the *Purāṇam* gives two *kaṭṭaḷais* for it. Perhaps there is a mistake made by the copyist. If this assumption is correct, we may amend the poem so as to give two to *Pañcamam* and one to *Kaucikam*. We must leave to the future research scholars in *Tamil* music, the elucidation of these forms of *Rāgas* and *Kaṭṭaḷais*.

IV

But *Cēkkiḻār* does not consider that this scheme represents the chronological order of *Ārūrar's hymns* and he is right in his conclusion. No musician is going to follow this method of singing in one tune in a particular period of his life and in other tunes in the succeeding periods of his life. *Cēkkiḻār* has to weave out a chronological order. He is guided by the traditional story of the life of *Ārūrar*. The *hymns* relating to the *Cēra* country have to come at the very end of *Ārūrar's* life. The references to *Caṅkili* and the loss of his eye-sight have to come only after *Ārūrar's* marriage with *Caṅkili*. So also the reference to *Paravai* can occur only after his marriage with this lady. For the same reason, the reference to *Ēyarkōṉ* and to *Ciṅkaṭi* and *Vaṉappakai* should occur according to the tradition after his marriage with *Paravai*.

V

The second consideration which weighs with *Cēkkiḻār* in arranging the *hymns* chronologically is that of geography. *Cēkkiḻār*, the *Cōḻa* minister, had ample knowledge of the roads and communications of the *Tamil* country and he makes *Ārūrar* follow the Royal roads of *Tamiḻakam*. In some places there are certain deviations. The *hymns* themselves contain evidence for these. On his way to *Muthukuṉṟam*, *Ārūrar* forgets *Kūṭalaiyāṟṟūr*[6] and he is reminded of it as we had already seen. In the *Tiruppuṟampayam hymn*,[7] *Ārūrar* mentions that he came from *Āṟaimēṟṟaḷi* to stay at *Iṉṉampar*.[8]

5. *S*. 41.
6. 7:85.
7. 7:35.
8. 7:35:1.

In *Ārūrar's* poems, there are more than one *hymn* to certain temples. On the basis of the traditional story of *Ārūrar, Cēkkiḻār* takes some of them to have been sung on an earlier occasion and some on a later occasion. From *Tiruveṇṇeinallūr, Ārūrar* proceeds worshipping at certain temples and reaches *Tiruvārūr* where he marries *Paravai* and sings his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* This may be taken as his first pilgrimage. *Tiruvārūr* becomes his place of residence from this time.

The second pilgrimage is to *Kuṇṭaiyūr, Kōḷili, Nāṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi* and *Valivalam* and the third is to *Tiruppukalūr* and *Tiruppaṉaiyūr.* These are not long pilgrimages. *Ārūrar* seems to have been going to some of the temples in and around *Tiruvārūr.*

The fourth pilgrimage is a long one. Therein he goes through the *Cōḻa* country and the *Koṅku* country to return through the *Cōḻa* country and the *Naṭu Nāṭu* to *Tiruvārūr.*

The fifth pilgrimage results in his marriage with *Caṅkili* and loss and regain of eyesight. He goes through the *Cōḻa* country, *Naṭunāṭu, Toṇṭaināṭu* up to *Trukkāḷatti* from where *Cēkkiḻār* says *Ārūrar* sang his *hymns* on *Tirupparuppatam* and *Tirukkētāram.* Our saint goes to *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* and marries *Caṅkili.* He leaves *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* and *Caṅkili,* and loses his eyesight on his way back to *Tiruvārūr.* Here, he goes through *Kāñcipuram* which he had already visited.

After coming to *Tiruvārūr,* he goes on his sixth pilgrimage to meet *Ēyarkōṉ* to worship with him at *Tiruppuṉkūr* and then to *Tirunākaikkārōṇam.* When he returns to *Tiruvārūr,* he meets *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ* and goes along with him on a pilgrimage, the seventh one, to the *Pāṇḍya* and *Cēra* countries. Whilst worshipping at *Rāmēśvaram* in the *Pāṇḍya* country, *Ārūrar* sings the *hymn* on *Tirukkētīccuram* in Ceylon just on the opposite shore in *Maṉṉār.* He returns from *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* to *Tiruvārūr* and again goes on his final pilgrimage, the eighth one, to *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* through *Tiruppukkoḷiyūr.*

VI

It may be noted that *Cekkiḻār* does not take our *Ārūrar* outside the *Tamil* country but makes him sing his *hymns* on *Cīparppatam* and *Tirukkētāram* from *Kāḷatti* and the *hymn* on *Tirukkētīccuram* from *Rāmēśvaram.* It is not clear why *Cēkkiḻār* comes

to this conclusion. Probably he feels either the country was in a troubled condition or that *Ārūrar's* life was too short to allow this long pilgrimage. Possibly he feels, if our Saint has visited *Tirukkētāram* he could have sung his *hymns* on other northern temples. In the *Tirukkētāram hymn, Ārūrar* refers to *Kurukkēttiram* and *Gōdavari* along with *Kumari* and *Cīparppatam.*[9] He simply says in that *hymn* that we should mention the sacred name of *Tirukkētāram.* But in the sixth verse, he refers to *Bhaktas* bathing happily in the sacred waters of *Kurukkēttiram* and *Gōdāvari.* In the seventh verse *Ārūrar,* our poet, speaks of the singing of the *Tamil* verses at *Tirukkētāram.* That means there must have been a number of pilgrims going to North from the *Tamil* country. If in a few cases we can assume that *Ārūrar* sang the *hymn* without going to the place mentioned therein, it is difficult to establish that he went and sang the other *hymns* in all the respective temples of the south. Pilgrims have been going from the northernmost limit of India to its southernmost limit and from its southernmost limit to the northernmost limit from the times of the *Caṅkam* poetry. If *Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār* could have gone to *Badarikāśramam* there is no reason why *Ārūrar* in the same *Pallava* age could not have gone to *Tirukkētāram.*

Whatever might be said to the pilgrimage to *Tirukkētāram,* there is no reason why he could not have visited *Cīparppatam* personally. The description of *Cīparppatam,* for there is nothing else but the description in that *hymn,* makes us feel that he is describing his own experience of the elephants, the deer, the boars, the peacocks and the parrots which he met whilst going up through that hazardous route to that mountain.

The same may be said of his *hymn* on *Tirukkēticcurram* in Ceylon. From the *Ramnad* district, one can easily sail to *Maṉṉār* from where one can easily go to this temple. (The boat leaves *Danuṣkōṭi* now to reach *Maṉṉār*). There are other places in the *Rāmnād* district from where one can reach Ceylon by a shorter route. Perhaps, *Cēkkiḻār,* who ought to have known this, does not feel certain that a Brahmin like *Ārūrar* or *Campantar* could have crossed the seas setting at naught the rules against the sea voyage. It is very difficult to reject the description of *Pālāvi* on whose bank this temple stood, the description of the ships standing

9. 7:78:6.

at the harbour of *Mātōṭṭam* and of the gardens round the temple as hearsay. The Ceylon prince *Māṉāparaṉaṉ* was a great friend of *Narasiṁhavarma Pallava* and he fought against *Pulakēsin*. *Narasiṁhavarmaṉ* sent a fleet to help *Māṉāparaṉaṉ* to regain the Ceylonese throne. He returned to the *Pallava* country. Again probably during the reign of *Rājasiṁha* another fleet was sent and he became firmly established as the king of Ceylon. In an age of such intimate relationship between Ceylon and the *Pallava* kingdom where *Ārūrar* was born, one can easily believe his going to worship at *Tirukkēticcuram*. No rule or regulation can stand against holy desires for worshipping at *Śiva's* temples. We know of *Śivācāryas* going to distant eastern islands.

Whether we agree with *Cēkkiḻar* or not about *Ārūrar* not personally visiting *Tirukkētāram* or *Tirukkēticcuram*, we cannot quarrel with the place which he had given to these *hymns* in the chronological arrangement of *Ārūrar's hymns*.

VII

Cēkkiḻār has taken all the available materials including the tradition, for arriving at the chronological arrangement of the *hymns*. To a certain extent the internal evidence itself justifies this arrangement. But it must be stated that if the tradition is not accepted, the whole arrangement has to be given up. As already been remarked, except for a few points, there is nothing improbable in the traditional story. Therefore, there is no other way but to accept this chronological order and trace as far as possible the development of his poetry and philosophy.

But our examinations of the *hymns* which follow suggests that at least in a few cases a different arrangement is called for. The temples of *Koṅku Nāṭu* perhaps were visited only along with the Cēra. The visit to *Malapāṭi, Pāccilāccirāmam, Āṉaikkā, Paiññīli, etc.*, also must have taken at about this time. Our study, as will be mentioned later on, also justifies certain other alterations.

PART I

TO ĀRŪR

Introduction

I

Coming to arrange the *hymns* conveniently, the first group of *hymns* may be taken as consisting of all the *hymns* which our poet had sung before he started on a pilgrimage from *Tiruvārūr*—*i.e.,* from *'Pittā piṟai cūṭī' hymn* to the *'Tiruttoṇṭattokai' hymn.*

II

These *hymns* express the first flush of the mystic experience, giving expression to the sudden joy of the vision of God so different from what he had known till then, to a realization that he would be no longer born and to the feeling of sudden contrast which sometimes drives the poet to condemn himself. In every one of these *hymns* he is referring to specific mystic experiences; "Having become His slave, shall I deny Him?" (*H.* 1); "O Lord! Bless me with the path of sacrifice and penance (not necessarily renunciation)" (*H.* 13); "Will I slight Him even for a while?" (*H.* 38); "O, Mind! Take refuge in His feet" (*H.* 64); "I saw the Lord at *Kaḻumalam*" (*H.* 58); "Will the Lord accept me as His servant?" (*H.* 73); "I am the servant of the servants of the Lord" (*H.* 39). Thus are expressed various struggling emotions stirred up by the new experience.

III

The poet in these verses describes Nature—the river *Peṇṇār* from its southern bank to the northern bank and the beautiful city of *Kaḻumalam.* He always thinks of the floods rushing with flowers, fruits, sandal, bamboo, ivory, peacock-feathers and precious gems. These are but the beginnings of his Nature Poetry, the Nature wherein he sees the reflection of His Lord.

IV

Our poet's love of *purāṇic* stories is also revealed in these *hymns,* stories which have a mystic significance. Perhaps this is one way of our poet speaking to the common man. Salvation is

for all; to bring about this, God has become enshrined Himself in the Temples and our poet has come to serve the Lord in this sphere by singing the various *hymns* of the temples to be sung by the people of the world.

V

In every last verse, the poet assures the readers of his *hymn* that they will be saved. The first *hymn* has no such assurance; probably this scheme comes to his mind only from the second *hymn.* In some subsequent *hymns* also our poet has not chosen to specify any result flowing from a recitation of his *hymn* probably because he thinks that such a singing itself is a patent bliss. In these *hymns* of the first group, he assures the readers of the blessings of the path of *Tapas,* of the attainment of Truth, Salvation, Fame and *Rudralōka* and of their becoming the followers and lovers of the Lord and suffering no more misery. Thus the ideal is described as absence of misery in a negative way and as Truth, Salvation and Fame in a positive way. These positive aspects further suggest as the other side, the miseries of the world as consisting in delusion, bondage and infamy which are also directly referred to. Fame is something more than the worldly fame. In this connection one must bear in mind the conception of fame as idealized by *Tiruvaḷḷuvar,* which must have been in the mind of our poet. The ephemeral and changing world—and our poet also refers to this evanescence in this very group of *hymns*—true to its nature, is there to swallow us and reduce us to dust. The great ones escape this; they die to live for ever. This is fame; this is eternity; this is the achievement of their full life and personality. Taken in this sense, salvation can alone be looked upon as true fame. The bliss is attained through *Tapas* or sacrifice, and penance, through the Love of God and through service unto Him as His follower. Becoming a follower is itself an achievement worthy of note—dedication to His service—submission to His will—taking refuge in Him and living in that divine communion or identity. Prayer and worship are also expressions of this love.

VI

From the very first *hymn* itself, our poet is emphasizing the doctrine that God is all kinds of relationships—*Sarvavida bandhu*—another form of the doctrine of love. Lord loves all and He is the embodiment of harmony. He is the sweetest, the most brilliant—our poet as such is fond of describing the Lord as the great

Māṇikkam and *Amutu* (*Amṛta*). He is the Master, the *Guru*; He is everything. The eight forms—the *'Aṣṭamūrta'* of *Śiva* referred to as the unique theory of the *Śaivites* in *Maṇimēkalai* are also mentioned by our poet and yet He is the Great Beyond. "He is I", our poet exclaims, suggesting the *Upaniṣad mantra*, *"Aham Brahmāsmi"*. This term may be interpreted as an expression of monism or qualified monism, even as the reference to *Rudralōka* may be so interpreted. But this monism cannot be of the extreme type leading to Solipsism but of the type of Practical *Vēdānta* of *Rāmakrishṇa*, for then only there can be room for worship, prayer and poetry. It is because of this practical *Vēdānta* that our saint passes easily from the personal to the impersonal forms of the Lord. He is immanent and transcendental.

VII

These *hymns* mark various stages in the first period of our poet's mystic life. He refers to his earlier life—the life he led before he was saved and condemns it. But these are exaggerations—appearing to him as defects only in contrast to the divine experience he is enjoying. Even in the midst of condemnation, there is a feeling of bliss and confidence. His confidence in the very *first hymn*, that he will have no more births is significant. He speaks of himself becoming a slave of Him. He begs for the path of *Tapas*. *Tirukkaḻumalam hymn* is important as giving an autobiography of his mystic life up that time. It makes direct reference to his experience of the Lord coming to save him who had been in quest of the Lord, though under delusion. The importance of the cult of the *Bhaktas* or the worship of the *Bhaktas* as God Himself is very well brought out by *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* where we have noted the ancient Indian conception of *Mahāvīra*, the *Tamilian* abhorrence of the word 'No', the *Śaivite* ideal of kingship, the doctrine of Grace, the characteristic feature of the *Bhaktas* consisting in truth, sincerety and self-sacrifice, the doctrine of *Tēvāram* that the Lord can be attained through Art, the importance of inner vision, the significance of the outward forms of worship and the life of self-surrender and communion.

CHAPTER I

TIRUVEṆṆEINALLŪR

(*Hymn* 1)

I

In the first *hymn*, when *Ārūrar* speaks of being blessed with the unique Grace of God, '*Peṟalākā Aruḷ*' (2) * the poet must have had some mystic experience of the Lord. He refers to his previous condition, his futile life of wandering like a ghost, only to become fatigued and tired without any thought of the Lord. He condemns his past life as that of a cruel liar, an ignorant fool, wasting life even as an idiot would his wealth. But, on receiving the Grace of God, he asserts that he is always thinking of the Lord without ever forgetting Him (1, 3). The Lord, he feels, is there to bless him. He does not want to prattle about things not yet clear to him and he begs of the Lord to tell him what the worshippers receive at the hands of the Lord (5). He feels certain that he will be never born and that even if he were to be born, he will never grow old (4). He addresses the Lord as the father (1); as the mother (3); as the great *svāmin* or the master (4); as the beginning of everything (5); as the great path (8); as the beautiful person (9) and as the precious things of the world (7). The words denoting the relationship occur at the most emphatic place — in the beginning of every fourth line. Like all great mystics, he sees God in everything and sings of the Lord becoming the flesh, the life, the body, the world, the space, the land, the sea and the mountains (7).

Again, like the mystics, he speaks the language of the *Purāṇas* or allegories or parables. The Lord is crowned with the crescent jewel (1, 6). He is like fire (6). He burnt the three castles of the air (6). He rides on the bull (4). He carries the *maḻu* (9). He sings the *Vēdas* and is with the damsel (9).

II

Tiruveṇṇeinallūr is on the southern bank of *Peṇṇār*. According to the tradition, the Brahmin who claimed *Ārūrar* as a slave

Note: Numbers within the brackets denote the numbers of the verses in Arurar's *hymns* except otherwise mentioned.

disappeared into the temple. The temple itself was known as *'Aruṭṭuṟai'*. Our poet speaks of his being blessed with the special Grace of the Lord and addresses Him as *'Aruḷāḷā'*, the Lord of Grace or *Aruḷ* (1). All the activities of the Lord consist in removing the sufferings of those who worship Him (9). One wonders whether it is because of his receiving signs of divine Grace in this place, or whether because the place is itself called *'Aruṭṭuṟai'* our poet describes the Lord as *'Aruḷāḷā'* (1). *'Aruḷāḷaṉ'* is a beautiful conception of the Lord and we find it popular even among the *Vaishṇavites* for *Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ* is one of the beloved names of their Lord.

III

"Uṉakkāḷāy iṉi allēṉ eṉalāmē" — 'After having become your slave, can I deny my slavery?' — This is the burden of all the verses in this *hymn*. It is probably because of this that the tradition speaks of *Ārūrar* first denying his being a slave and later on reconciling himself to the inevitable. With the addition of a word describing the Lord as forming various kinds of relationship, this refrain forms the fourth line in every verse inclusive of the last verse. The third line runs, if we exclude the first word which varies according to the poetic assonance, as follows: *"Peṇṇaitteṉpāl veṇṇei nallūr aruṭṭuṟaiyuḷ"* — *'Aruṭṭuṟai* of *Veṇṇeinallūr* lying on the southern bank of *Peṇṇār* or *Peṇṇai"*. The first two lines describe the Lord except in verses 2, 3 and 10.

In verse 3, the second line describes the *Peṇṇār* and in the tenth verse the first two lines describe the river. The flood carries bamboos (2) and other plants (4). It dashes and pushes along gold, gems and diamonds (3); therefore it appears to be full of lightnings (3). The river is full of pollen dust (5) and honey (7), probably because of the flowers it carries. It thus looks as though specially adorned. The phrase, *"Miṉṉār Peṇṇai"* (3) seems to involve a pun on the word *'Peṇ'* suggesting the beautifully adorned bride. It is rich in fertility (9). It receives all the waters of the cloud streaming into it (10). It begin to hew down its own bank, with its hands of waves (10). It is famous in all the cities of the world, pushing along many a valuable shining gem—thus runs the famous *Peṇṇār* (10). All through this *hymn* runs his love of Nature, here the beautiful river of *Peṇṇai* wherein probably he sees the reflection of God.

CHAPTER II

TIRUTTURAIYŪR

(*Hymn* 13)

I

The second *hymn* which is sung at *Tirutturaiyūr* is included as the 13th. After the spiritual revolution, there is naturally a revulsion of feeling against the world. He, therefore, prays in this *hymn* for the path of renunciation and sacrifice (*Tava neri*). Here again, he addresses the Lord in endearing terms of worldly relationship, as the lover (1), the father (2), the mother (3), the brother (9), the master (7), the *Guru* or *Siṣṭa* (6), a loving friend (4), an elder brother or chief (*Aiyā*) (8), and God (10); in short, as one who assumes all forms or roles (*Vēṭam*) (5). The poet's love of nature, representing, as it were, the concrete form of the Lord, is definitely expressed in this *hymn*, for, in all the verses, the first three lines are taken up by this description of *Turaiyūr*, on the banks of the river *Peṇṇār*, wherein bathe *bhaktas* and beautiful damsels. The saint has reached a state of self-confidence. No more does he condemn himself as a liar. He assures us, in the last verse, that he will never speak any falsehood and that those who follow Him will attain nothing but truth.

II

If *Veṇṇeinallūr* is on the southern bank of *Peṇṇār*, *Turaiyūr* is on its northern bank. The mountain streams roll together as the unique *Peṇṇār* pushing along precious gems and dashing them against its banks (1); thrusting along the white tusks of the elephant, bringing and dashing the pearls, runs *Peṇṇār* (2); thrusting along the sandal and black *'akil'*, casting their fragrance all round, the red cool waters of *Peṇṇār* descends (3); uprooting *champakam* and *mallikai*, full of buds and bringing them and casting them away with force for the bees to swarm and enjoy, runs *Peṇṇār* (4); tossing down the mangoes and jack fruits on the sides, it casts them away for the whole country to feast on them (5); pulling down the *konrai* of honeyed flowers and *vanni*,

it brings and dashes them all so full of buds (6); rushing along with the beautiful peacock feathers and white foam, it brings them full of pollen dust and dashes them all (7); pushing down *vēṅkai* and *kōṅku*, of unplucked flowers, it brings and dashes them to fill up the fields (8); the clouds of the sky stand and shower their rain and the river brings and dashes the water to enrich the lands with alluvial soil (9).

III

On its northern bank stands *Tuṟaiyūr* wherein bathe in the waters the damsels of broad collyrium-fed eyes (8), and the doll-like virgins (9) of waists adorned with *mēkalai* (1) speaking musical words like sugarcane (4). It is thus surrounded by ponds full of flowers blooming and ready to bloom (7) — this is the state of beauty. Many monkeys dance—even the animals seem to imitate the dancing Lord (3). The music of songs, dance and drum, does not cease (6). *Bhaktas* frequent the place praising and worshipping the Lord (2). Human art is not absent; the palaces full of gold surround the temple (5).

IV

The pattern of the verses is as follows: the first two lines describe the *Peṇṇār* and the third line *Tuṟaiyūr*. The fourth line, as already stated, ends with the words *'Uṉai vēṇṭikkoḷvēṉ tava neṟiyē'*. The first line ends in *'unti'* (1, 2, 3, 7) or *'cāṭi'* (4, 5, 6, 8) or *'poḻiya'* (9). The second line ends in the words *"Koṇarn-teṟṟiyōṟ Peṇṇai vaṭapāl'* except in verse 3 which ends in the words *'Puṉal vantiḻi Peṇṇai vaṭapāl'* and the 5th which ends in *'Vanteṟṟi ōr Peṇṇai vaṭapāl'*. If *'eṟṟi'* is taken as a conjunctive participle, there is no other verb with which it can go, unless we take *'ōr'* as one such in the sense of 'coming to senses and cogitating'. Therefore, it has to be taken as a noun (that which dashes) put in apposition with *Peṇṇai*. Or, it must be changed into some other verbal form such as *'eṟṟa'* making thus possible the beauty described in the third line. The 10th verse, we had suggested (in our essay on Numbers), may be an interpolation and it does not follow the pattern. The uniformity of the pattern extending even to lines, stamps this *hymn* as an early poem of our saint, inspite of the reference to *Tapas* which naturally does not mean renunciation.

V

In the first *hymn,* our poet gave out his name as *Ārūraṉ* but did not specify any good emanating from its recitation. In this *hymn,* he states that those who are masters of this, of *Ūran* of unfailing or neverlying *Tamiḻ,* (or, it may mean the *Tamiḻ* of *Ūraṉ* who never speaks falsehood), will truly be blessed with the path of *Tapas.* Our poet, in singing the *hymn,* has experienced the attainment of this path of *Tapas* and that is why he assures the readers that they will undergo the same experience (11).

TIRUVATIKAI VĪRAṬṬĀṈAM

(*Hymn* 38)

I

The starting point of the next *hymn* (38) is his remembrance of his past disregard for the Lord; but here, there is no sorrowful feeling of remorse. The disturbance, therefore, in his mind has come to an end. "Will I ever slight Him even for a moment"?— that is the refrain of the verses in this *hymn.* It amounts to saying he shall not. "I live in the hope of being crowned with the feet of the Lord", he cries (1). Is there any one in this world who does not know his father or Lord?" — he asks (1). He, it is true, calls himself a foolish dog (1), but this is an expression of self-surrender — revelling in the service of God rather than an expression of self-condemnation. There is a feeling of hope colouring this *hymn.* The poet escapes from the burden of sinfulness and asserts, "What does it matter if I had forgotten in the past, my Lord? What if I had remembered Him then? Today I live happily blessed with a heart which shall never forget Him" (2). His is an experience of bliss. The Lord is as precious as gold, good rubies, white and shining pearls and He is like the coral mountain (2). He is the nearest of the nearest, the father (and the mother) (3); nay, He is the father of his father (4) — perhaps the saint feels that his heritage has been purified. God is sweet like the sugarcane and the candy (3). He is everything sublime — the four directions, the wind, the fire, the sea and the mountain top (4). He is the Great Beyond, who is at the same time the very 'I' (4). Like other great mystics, our poet revels in his feeling of identity with God. The identity and uniformity reveal the Absolute of the great law (*vidhi*) (4, 6). It is the law of union of the loving Lord inseparable from the loving saint (3). "Even he had been saved", (7) this our saint had already expressed. The Lord, out of His love and pity, showers the blessing of salvation on the souls struggling in the sea of *Karma* (7).

He loves all, the sinner and the saint, and this harmony, our poet sees in its concrete form, in the matted hair of the Lord

where sleep together the crescent moon and the serpent (3, 6). There is the eternal Grace in the form of the mother (3, 5, 6). He is the great father of the beautiful *Muruka* (5, 8) and He is with the Mother overflowing with beauty and sympathy (5). The sufferings, He destroys. Has He not swallowed the poison and does not the throat shine ever blue? (1, 7). He has killed the elephant and covered Himself with its skin (1, 6). He is the Lord of the bull of *Dharma* (1, 10). He has destroyed the three cities, the three castles of the air (7, 9). Egoism can never stand before Him and the pride of *Rāvaṇa* came to naught (9). He dances on the burning ghat (1) with the bones as His ornament (10), that eternal dance of the Absolute spreading its hands (7) on the eight points of the compass, when nothing but that exists swallowing everything within its omnipresence. "I have disregarded Him in my speech. But all the same He is my lover though unknown to others. How can I slight Him even for a moment?" (10).

II

The Lord is impersonal and personal. The beauty of the Lord, like the red glow of sunset, captivates our poet's heart (8). "Though He is the Lord of the *Dēvas*, He is mine" (8) exclaims the saint.

III

Our poet feels that God has a special love for this *Tamil* land which lies on the South (8) and this probably makes him all the more happy. He repeats the significance of this name he has coined for the Lord, *Teṉṉaṉ*, by explaining it as the One whose mind never goes to the North, East or West. He is the Southerner on the crown of the great Southern *Pāṇḍya, Neṭu Māṟaṉ*, the contemporary of Campantar. (8).

CHAPTER IV

TIRUTTIṈAI NAKAR

(*Hymn* 64)

I

Once again the world and its temptations become visible. The mind, which is a creature of habits, attempts to remember with pleasure the temptations which appeared to be pleasant. There is also a terror, born in the mind, because of the new spiritual awakening. Our poet, therefore, addresses his mind in the next *hymn* (64), sung at *Tiruttiṉai nakar,* now known as *Tīrttaṉakiri.* Whilst this internal struggle is going on, there comes to his mind the vision of the Lord with His shining forehead besmeared with the sacred ashes, the symbol of purity that which shines as the Absolute, when everything is swallowed in it. In the fore-head shines the eye destroying all egoism and obstruction. The damsel on the left represents to our saint the great divine principle of Grace. The Lord appears to him as perfect without any defects, a beautiful personality holding up the Ganges within His matted hair, the great flame of Divinity beyond the reach of the eternal ones. This is the Sprout of *Śiva* (1).

II

Encouraged by this vision, our poet calls his mind to take refuge at once in this glorious Sprout (1). He begs of his mind to listen to his words and assures it that there is no cause for fear. The only way to get rid of birth is to take refuge in the Lord, the Lord who destroyed the three castles in the air — probably *Arūrar* feels that this destruction, as already explained by *Tirumūlar,* is the destruction of the effect of the three *malas* which lead to birth and death (2). He further proceeds to advise his mind not to end his life by becoming a prey to the disease, deluded by passionate attachment to women of beautiful eyes. The Lord of *Dharma,* the bull, the Beginning of everything, the father of His followers, the Lord of Grace,—the form of our Mother,—who alone could save us—in Him we have to take refuge (3). "Doing sinful acts and prattling many things in this wide world with a confused mind, you tire yourself out for your livelihood and fall down unconscious crying, 'Alas!' To escape from this calamity, using your reasoning capacity think of the

greatness of the Lord who removed the obstructions of the rude elephant and wore its own skin as the symbol of His greatness. He is a precious gem, who is the Almighty (or near to us as our son) sweet like the heavenly nectar and who is the Lord of all Gods. Take refuge in Him" (4).

"You think much of this life which counts for nothing and you go on amassing wealth. Your body suffers in this effort and yet you speak that you can live for ever; alas! my mind! be convinced that this is all a delusion. Take refuge in the Lord with shoulders firm like pillars or mountains, in the great Dancer of happiness moving us all" (5). "Leave off this evanescent life of falsehood. Even the bodies of the monarchs who ruled the world and performed *Dharma* decayed and they suffered and died in the end. He is the great power, greater than all. He holds in His hand, the serpent (of this Universe, which expands its hood as an act of creation and contracts it as an act of destruction). He is the great father. Oh, my mind! take refuge in Him" (6). "But for His support we cannot cross the sea of life, however much we may purify our hearts, perform *tapas,* grow matted hair and wear bones as ornaments. These, but bespeak our egoism. Take refuge in the Sprout of *Śiva* praised by all, as the Great Beginning" (7). "This life will depart from this world, whilst the loving relatives, powerful allies and others, keep awake and watchful, only to weep in the end. Realize this, get rid of this turmoil of foolish life and take refuge in Him: the Lord of our Mother, our very life, the destroyer of Death, the great God" (8). "Take refuge in Him, leaving off the vain paths, before many come to speak ill of us" (9). "Slighting this life of great falsehood, we can escape" (10). Thus our poet, convinced in his mind, assures that the salvation will result to those who sing these verses.

III

Our poet is said to have sung a *hymn* on *Cidambaram.* This *hymn* is not available. A summary, however, of it, is given by *Cēkkiḻār.* The world does not consist merely of wealth, women, relatives and egoistic *tapas.* It also reveals to us the Grace and the beauty of the Lord. The beautiful forms are but incarnations of the Lord, inspiring reverential love for Him. Therefore, when he saw the vision of the dance of *Śiva,* our poet confessed, according to *Cēkkiḻār,* that his birth in this very world giving him this vision was the purest and the most blissful of births.

CHAPTER V

TIRUKKAḺUMALAM

(*Hymn* 58)

I

At *Tirukkaḻumalam* or *Cīkāḻi*, he had another spiritual experience and he explains in every verse of this *hymn* (58) that he has seen and realized Him. In the last verse, he says he has realized the feet of the Lord, unknown except to those who weep, bearing no separation from Him. This *hymn* is an expression of his bliss.

II

"I have seen the Lord who had showered His Grace on me, ordaining me for that purpose and saving me from birth and death" (1). "He has blessed me, with a mind which never forgets Him, that great gift of not being born without ever escaping from the Lord. Who can get this gift like me? I sing of Him to have a glimpse of His blue throat. I am capable of going unto Him and embracing Him" (4). "I worship Him whilst my mouth goes on uttering His names with reverential fear. The mind which fritters itself away in many ways because of its old *karma* has been made one pointed. I have been asking for the temples of the Lord for many days. I have now realized Him at *Kaḻumalam*" (5). "Once I was afraid of the powerful and great *karmas.* I suffered but I have been blessed with a mind which can never forget the Lord. I have become all love. My whole body has become happy and I am praying unto the Lord and worshipping at His feet; that is the law. I have realized the Lord, that sweet sugar-cane, removing the birth, root and branch, that sweet honey, that nectar. Slowly springs up as a bud and blossoms into a flower in my mind, that Great Master, the embodiment of *Dharma*" (6). "I know of no other prop for me in this birth or the next. I do not consider even my loving relations as of any help. I think of Him that brilliant Light I worship, as my great prop and support. I do not know of anyone but Him that is the

knowledge I had received for being saved" (2). He is the youngest of the *youngest, and the oldest of the oldest.* In my dream He has been one with me and when I have opened my eyes I could not see him. I have realized Him at *Kaḻumalam*" (3). "He has taught me and made me realize salvation, true knowledge and the various paths, unknown even to the eternal ones" (2).

"Others were praising Him; the saints were worshipping Him; imitating His lovers I also followed them. It is said that the elephant will fall into the net spread out for a hare. I followed those who struggle for attaining Him and I have realized Him at *Kaḻumalam,* that cloud which is so dear to the cultivator, the wealth and brilliance of gold, that flash of lightning, that thing which I can call all my own" (7). "Even the sins born of thought are destroyed by those who think of Him and worship. That is the brilliant flame, the Lord of the Mother, the precious gem, the secret of the *Vēdas,* the fame of all descriptions. Our shining light, unknown to the two, I have realized at *Kaḻumalam*" (8). He is everything in all the eight forms, our Lord who has become one with the mind of a stranger like me, even as the water consumed by red hot iron becomes one with the iron" (1). "Those who are sure of their '*Maṟai*' reside in the "house". That is how delusion works. They bathe in the "tanks" — thus goes the world. All this life and ceremonies appear to be very real. Unformunately I have not realized that all these appear true because of His support" (9).

This verse (9) is not clear. The following meaning may be suggested: "*Maṟai iṭaittuṉintavar*"—He who had been realized through the *Vēdas, i.e., Śiva; "Maṉai iṭai iruppa"*—whilst the Lord resides in this house of a body; "*Vañcaṉai ceytavar*'—the five organs duped us all; "*Poykaiyum māya*"—their falsehood and activities were made to die away; "*Tuṟai-yuṟakkuḷittu*"—the Lord made us approach the ford or path of *jñāna* and bathe in (the experience of) the divine bliss; "*Uḷatāka vaittu*"—thus He had made us to be the truth of existence; "*Uytta*"—He had taken us along the path of salvation; "*Uṇmai*"—this is the Truth; but it is also, "*Takaviṉmai*"—my unfitness; "*Ōrēṉ*"—this I have not realized" (9).

Then came the sight of the sprouting crescent moon on the matted hair. He is our Lord, the embodiment of infinite Grace, swallowing all our sins of poison; there shines the blue throat reminding of this—I have realized *Him* at *Kaḻumalam* (9).

III

It is clear that our poet had a great spiritual experience when he sang this *hymn*. The blissful, so precious and so significant that he is sure that he will never die. This dream reminds us of a love-sick maiden and the word he used '*viravi*' (3) justifies our interpreting it in terms of mystic love. The simile of the red hot iron consuming water emphasizes this mystic unity or identity (1).

IV

The *Purāṇic* stories are also mentioned—the Lord sharing the body of the damsel of the mountain (1), the mat-lock carrying the *Ganges* (1), His white ear-ring (1), His fatherhood of Subrahmaṇya (3), His dance (3), His *koṉṟai* flower (4), His blue throat (4), His battle axe (5), His form of lightning (7), His being beyond the reach of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8) and His crescent moon on the mat-lock (9).

V

Our poet calls the Lord, the chief (*Talaivaṉ*) (1), the father (*Emmāṉ*) (1), the patron (*Pirāṉ*) (1), the transcendental reality (*Kaṭavuḷ*) (2), the master (1), elder brother (*Aiyaṉ*) (6), the Person of *Dharma* (*Aṟavaṉ*) (6), Wealth (*Poruḷ*) (7), the significance of *Vēdas* (*Maṟaipporuḷ*), (8), the Ruler of great Grace and mercy (*Pēraruḷāḷaṉ*) (9), the *Guru* (*Aṭikaḷ*) (9), (10). (We had to distinguish among these terms, some of which are often used as synonyms). The term ("*Pēraruḷāḷaṉ*") (9) is significant. He also refers to God as '*Eṇvakai Oruvaṉ*' (1), One who appears in eight ways—the five elements, the sun, the moon and the soul.

The other important term which is the basic truth of *Śaivism* is *Paśupati* (5), the Lord of the fettered souls. Our poet describes the Lord as the sweetest thing (6) (honey and so on) gradually developing as a great spiritual bliss (6) (the bud, the flower and so on), the most precious thing (8) (the gem and so on). *Māṇikkam* (8) is a description of which our poet is very fond of, and the brightest light of knowledge (8) (*Oḷi*). He is fame itself (8). He is full of Grace but He is also the law and *Dharma* (5, 6). The only way to reach Him is to weep and cry for Him (10).

VI

The description of *Kaḻumalam* is also given. It is the oldest city which floated on the sea at the time of the destruction of the

world (1). It is even now on the sea shore where go and come the tides of the dark roaring sea on the *'kaṇṭal'* grown banks of lagoons (5). The city is beautiful with many a garden of plantains and sugar-canes (4) and with fields where grow thick the great paddy (6), where play the swarms of *'kayal'* (carps) with *vāḷai* (sword fish) (7). Our poet also refers to *Tiruttiṉai Nakar* (3). Our poet calls himself *'Ūraṉ'*, a contracted form of *Ārūraṉ*, and the loving (son of) *Caṭaiyaṉ* (19). Those who sing this *hymn* of ten verses with hands raised high in worship are the followers of the Lord; and misery and affliction will never come near them—that is the assurance our poet gives (10).

CHAPTER VI

TIRUVĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 73)

I

Tiruvārūr became the permanent place of *Ārūrar's* residence and his *hymns* reveal a special attachment of the poet to this place. It is here he is said to have married *Paravai.* The first *hymn* according to *Periyapurāṇam* sung here, *viz., hymn* 73, is not a *hymn* of joy or bliss. Feelings of joy and despondency succeed each other in the lives of the mystics. When they think of the mystic experience, they are full of bliss. But when they open their eyes to the world and contrast their previous condition with this state of divine joy, they pass into a mood of self-condemnation and this *hymn* gives expression to one such feeling of despondency.

II

In the first verse, the poet speaks of *Śiva* as *Rudralōkaṉ,* the Lord of the *Rudra* world. It is not always clear in Indian poetry, whether the divine world the poet speaks of, is an actual world or a spiritual plane, representing the highest spritual experience. Here itself, our poet speaks of our Lord as commingling in all our speech whether in the morning or in the evening, whether on the bank or on the sea or on the mountain (1). This may either mean that everything we talk ultimately refer to Him; for nothing exists apart from Him. Or, it may mean in the midst of worldly talk, He suddenly inspires our speech. Either way this description emphasizes the omnipresence of *Śiva.*

III

It is another characteristic feature of the mystic poets especially in India, that they pass without any difficulty from the personal to the impersonal forms of God and *vice versa.* Here, in the very first verse, *Ārūrar* speaks of the Lord as the husband of the damsel of the mountain; the king of the *vānavas* and *tānavas* (1). Our poet speaks of the Lord with the matted hair, shining with the crescent moon, the serpent and the water (4); He who is besmeared with the ash (5); He who has adorned Himself with *koṉṟai*

wreath (7); He who had restrained *Rāvaṇa* (8); the Eternal God worshipped by *Kumāra, Brahman, Viṣṇu* and other *Dēvas* (9); the Lord who had swallowed the poison (10). In every one of the verses, our poet assures that *Śiva* resides at *Ārūr*. All these verses are addressed to worshippers of *Śiva* begging them to ask the Lord whether He will accept him as his servant. The spiritual mediator, a *Guru* or a brother worshipper holds an important place in the practical religion of the Hindus. He is a *ghaṭaka,* who brings about the inter-relationship between the thirsting souls and God. In the mystic language of love poetry, the lovesick maiden addresses the birds and others (*H.* 37) to carry her message of love to the Lord and the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators have interpreted these as referring to their spiritual *Gurus.*

IV

As usual the first words of the last lines emphasize the varied relationships God bears to us. He is the king (1); He is the Beginning (5); He is our father (7); He is the Lord of the Universe (8); He is *Īśa* (10) or the Leader; He is *'Iṟaivaṉ',* the Lord who is all-pervading (4); He is *'Aruttaṉ',* the wealth or that which matters (6); He is *'Iṉiyaṉ'* or the sweetest (2); He resides where the *Vēdas* and their subsidiary *'aṅgas'* are recited (3).

V

All the verses, except the first, the second and the fifth are self condemning. We expressed our doubts about the genuineness of the 5th verse, where the poet praises himself as one who has never departed from the path of justice, as one who brings about freedom from trouble or danger, as one who never gets angry with *Vēdic* scholars and who never goes to those who become angry (5). In the second verse the meaning is not very clear; in the second line, he says he is displeased with those who displease him; that he never speaks flatteringly. But the first line is a glow with his love for the God. "I had not known slighting Him on the ground that He stands lonely." All of a sudden he is reminded of the greatness of God and he speaks of Him in honorific plural as *'tammai'.* "I love Him or regard Him a good deal". The first verse is only a description of the Lord. In the other verses the poet is condemning himself; "I never speak things direct. I am never a help to those who follow me. I am as hard-hearted as a stone" (3). "The path I follow, my knowledge, my attachment of continence and my justice are all very bad. I love

or regard highly, faults and cruelty. I go about doing things as I like" (4). "I love or regard most, the wealth. I go about teaching without practising. I offer no help even to one among the many who suffer. I am no prop to those who come unto me" (6). "I do not cut myself away from the varying rhythms of activities of this world. I do not fall at the feet of those who had taken refuge in You" (7). " '*Neṉṭikkoṉṭēyum kilāyppaṉ*'—'Though moving like a worm, I am sure to be enraged.' This is certain. Even unto those who are proud of their strength, I speak only in an arrogant way. I know nothing but the fundamental principle of the universe" (8).

This statement does not harmonize with the self-condemning spirit of the poem; but the poet may be seeing nothing good about him except his reliance on God (8). In verse 2, also, he has said he has the greatest regard for God. Or, the word '*aṉṟi*' (8) may be interpreted as becoming angry; and the word is used in this sense in verse 10. In that case, the poet must be saying, "I lose my patience and get enraged at the discussion or statement about the fundamental principle and therefore I know nothing about it."

VI

"I know not who are our people and who are others. I live continuing to see the same things in this world—relying upon its phenomenon, rather than on its noumenon. I am fond of the bustling noise of the world" (9). "I do not cut myself away from the fetters of attachment. I speak defying everyone. If I speak, I speak nothing but wickedness. My mind is full of faults. I love very much the bustling noise" (10).

In this way the poet condemns himself, feeling penitent for his past life, in a confessing mood; but when analysed, these exaggerated condemnations disclose nothing but his anger or frustration and his helplessness in this world. Thus this *hymn* reveals only the moral greatness of the poet. It is only great minds who had a vision of their ideal that would confess like this. In the last verse the poet speaks of him as one who is capable of thinking in these terms. It is this impatience which our poet talks of in this *hymn* that reminds us of the episode of his first quarrel with the Lord coming as the old Brahmin in *Periyapurāṇam*. His attachment to the beauties of the world and his feeling at home in the midst of the bustling noise, make him unique among the *Śaivite*

saints. But even in the midst of the varying phenomena in the world and its attractions he confesses, he loves only the Lord. These characteristics give a picture of our saint and remind us of Great *Janaka* living in the midst of Royal splendour, though always concentrating his mind on the Absolute. This *hymn* therefore reveals the subsequent life of our saint. The spiritual revolution effected remains unchanged. His firm dependence on God is never affected. There is no fall. His worldly life is but a life of divine communion. The *Śaivites* look upon this as the great message of our poet's life.

VII

References to the *Purāṇic* stories and descriptions are found in this *hymn* as well: *viz.,* the Lord's bride, His sovereignty over the Angels and demons (1), His mat-lock with the crescent moon, the serpent and the waters (4), His sacred ashes (5), His bull and His wanderings all over the three worlds (7), the vanquishment of *Rāvaṇa* (8) the God worshipped by *Kumāra, Viṣṇu, Brahma* and other *Dēvas* (9), His feast of poison (10).

The description of *Tiruvārūr* as a place of fruit yielding arecanuts in the groves of many fruits is significant (2). The city of *Nāval* where our poet grew into manhood is full of fertile fields and resounds with the soft music of the drum. (11).

The poet describes himself as *Ārūraṉ* of *Nāval,* as one with the round and strong shoulders embraced by the goddess of wealth (11). Perhaps our poet like so many Brahmins of the age like *Mayūrasarmaṉ,* the founder of the *Kaḍamba* family of rulers, was politically great as a chieftain. He describes this *hymn* as Chandam—a rhythmic *hymn* sung according to a specific time or *ṭāḷa.* It is a musical composition and those who can sing it as such will attain fame—so assures the poet. That seems to be the preoccupation of his mind.

CHAPTER VII

TIRUTTONṬATTOKAI

(*Hymn* 39)

I

The next *hymn* which Nampi *Ārūrar* sings whilst living with *Paravaiyār* at *Tiruvārūr* is the famous *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* which we have discussed at length at another place.[1]

II

Certain ideals portrayed in this *hymn* may be generalized on the basis of the descriptive terms used with reference to the saints enumerated herein. Residence in a particular place itself becomes a glorious life as is made clear by the phrase *'Thillaivāḻ Antaṉar'*.

III

Refusing to say 'No' when a request is made is the greatest ideal of the Tamilians since the *Caṅkam* age, and *Nampi Ārūrar* realizes that this is the message of some of the lives of the *Śaiva* saints, and he, therefore, glorifies this kind of munificence; *"Illaiyē eṉṉātā Iyaṟpakai"* (1) *"Vaḷḷal Māṉakkañcāṟaṉ"* (2), *"Cīrkoṇṭa pukaḻvaḷḷal Ciṟappuli"* (6), *"Kārkoṇta Koṭai Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār"* (6).

IV

True to the ancient Indian conception of *Mahāvīra, Ārūrar* speaks of the path of the Śaivite saints as the path of victory. *"Vellumā mika valla Meypporuḷ"* (1) and perhaps the lives of some of the heroes must have appeared glorious to his eyes from this point of view of self-sacrifice and patronage. The victory here is born of self-conquest as is made clear by the description of *"Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟaṉ"* (8), as *"Niṟaikkoṇṭa cintaiyāl Nelvēli veṉṟa Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟaṉ"* (8).

1. See Vol. IV.

V

Sovereignty is a symbol of divinity as explained by us in another place. It is not a symbol of the power of inflicting punishment. It is that peculiar form of Grace which protects its subjects. It is this idea he emphasizes when he speaks of his contemporary ruler as *"Ulakelām kākkiṉṟa perumāṉ"* (9). We have already brought out the special significance of Tamil and Southern cultures which are the very forms of Śiva; and to rule as the very embodiment of this culture appears to *Nampi Ārūrar* as the greatest glory, for instance of that great saint *"Teṉṉavaṉāyulakāṇṭa Ceṅkaṇār"* (11). This conception of *Śaivite* rulership is further elaborated in the phrase *"Mummaiyāl Ulakāṇṭa Mūrti"*, the three being *Vibhūti, Rudrākṣa* and *Jaṭā,* symbolizing the divine purity, love and renunciation or *Tyāga.* The conception of *tyāga* or renunciation is made clear by the very name *Aiyaṭikaḷ.*

VI

But it is not a negative philosophy, not a mere running away from the world that *Śaivism* preached to *Nampi Ārūrar.* The world is beautiful, with its rich growth of nature, which are all but the various playful forms of the Lord. As *Appar* sings, 'the Lord has no form other than that of *Umai,* the embodiment of the Grace and the whole world is but His dress'—*"Umaiyalāturuvam illai, Ulakalātu uṭaiyatillai"* and also *"Tānalatulakam illai"*.[2]

There are the ever-expanding groves—*"Viripoḻil cūḻ kuṉṟai"* (1); the waters with the ripples—*"Alaimalinta puṉal"* (2); ever resounding with the praise of the Lord—*"Olipuṉal"* (4); the city surrounded by the sea—*"Kaṭaṟkāḻi"* (6). The coral on the shore drives out the darkness in the old Mylapore of *Vāyilāṉ*—*"Tuṟaikkoṇṭa cempavaḷam iruḷakaṟṟum cōtit toṉ Mayilai Vāyilāṉ"*.

This is merely the message of *Ñāṉacampantar's* poems and in describing the Lord, *Nampi Ārūrar* experiences Him as the Lord of the flower *koṉṟai* full of honey and sweet fragrance where the bee hums—*"Vamparā varivaṇṭu maṇanāṟa malarum matu malar naṟkoṉṟaiyāṉ"* (5). Not only is the world the incarnation of His

2. 4: 40: 9 and 1.

Grace but the enjoyment of the things of Nature is the very communion with God. That is the message of the life of *Nampi Ārūrar.* He describes the saints as being adorned with flowers, and other ornaments from this point of view: *"Allimel mullai am tār Amarnīti"* (1); *"Ārkoṇṭa vēṟ kūṟṟaṉ"* (6); *"Maṭdlcūḻnta tār Nampi Itaṅkaḻi* (9); *Varivaḷaiyāḷ Māṉi* (11).

VII

Truth and sincerity are the other characteristics of the saints which appeal to *Nampi Ārūrar—"Meymmaiyē tirumēṉi vaḻipaṭā niṟka"* (3); *"Poyyaṭimai yillāta pulavar"* (7); *"Meyyaṭiyāṉ"* (7)—are some of his descriptions of the saints. This upright path is the path where stands firm the Grace of the Lord and it is this path that, according to *Nampi Ārūrar,* Appar followed: *"Tiruniṉṟa cemmaiyē cemmaiyāk koṇṭa Tirunāvukkaraiyaṉ"* (4). Scholarship and art shine only when they take the form of truth and sincerity. The glory of art and knowledge lies in divine realization. Even illiterate *Kaṇṇappar* could be the greatest artist because of his spiritual realization. Art thus becomes a mode of divine life; it is the art of life. Even the blind can be blessed with this ideal and divine life—*"Nāṭṭamiku Taṇṭi"* (5), where one does not forget the feet of the Lord: *"Maṟavātu kalleṟinta Cākkiyarkkum aṭiyēṉ"* (6). This life of self-surrender is important. No other protection is needed; it is the greatest armour—*"Kaṟaikkaṇṭaṉ kaḻalaṭiyē kāppukkoṇṭirunta"* (8). But that does not prevent the knowledge of the *Vēdas—"Maṟai Nāvaṉ"* (11). *Rudra hymn* of the *Vēda* is important as is made clear by the name *"Rudrapaśupati".* Honour and love are equally important as is made clear by the names *"Māṉi"* (11) and *"Nēcaṉ"* (11).

VIII

The life of service is another characteristic feature of the *Śaivite* saints—*"Meyyaṭiyāṉ"* (7)—they are all humility. Acting according to the divine intuition or ideal is another mark of saints, *viz., "Tirukkuṟipputtoṇṭar"* (3). They may assume any form and be in any walk of life, king, minister, hunter, shepherd, Buddhist or leader like *Campantar* or mystic like *Tirumūlar* or wanderer about the world as no more than a ghost or *pēy.* It is the inner vision and realization that are important. They become one with the Lord and every one of their acts is inspired like the inner reality. They have no prejudice or passion and what appears to

our limited vision as acts of sin become dear to the Lord or the Universal Consciousness as acts of love and He, out of love, swallows as nectar what out of fear we look upon as poison and sin.

IX

There is a note of intimacy in the last verse where our poet calls *Hara* as "My own" (11). He calls himself the loving son of *Caṭaiyaṉ* and *Icaiñaṉi,* the ruler of *Nāvalūr* (11). This *hymn* represents this kind of slavery and service unto the Lord's followers. Those will be happy, who, at listening to this description of service—our poet is sure—will become the lovers of the Lord of *Ārūrar.*

PART II

IN THE CŌḺA COUNTRY

Introduction

I

Hymns No. 8 to 22 have been grouped together as belonging to the period of his married life with *Paravai.* He describes himself in one of the *hymns* as the father of *Ciṅkaṭi* (15 : 10). The *Tirukkōḷili hymn* (20) is said to have been sung for transporting to *Paravai's* house the paddy he received. But it is not a mere prayer for obtaining labourers. It is a *hymn* of self-surrender revealing our poet's complete dependence on the Lord. In the other *hymns* also the poet reveals this self-surrender to he Lord. He points out that some of the stories about the Lord have inspired him to take refuge in God.

II

Our poet in these *hymns* exclaims to the Lord that he shall not think or sing of any one else but the Lord. In the *Tiruvalivalam hymn* (67) he speaks of the vision of the Lord he had there. In the *Tiruppukalūr hymn* (34) he assures the poets, that there is no doubt whatever in their ruling the heavens if they sing of the Lord. *Tiruppaṉaiyūr hymn* (87) speaks of the Lord as the beautiful one. The *Naṉṉilam hymn* (98) asserts that the Lord has come to *Naṉṉilam* for saving us all. In *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai hymn* (88) he begs of the Lord to bless him as well. The *Tiruvāñciyam hymn* tells us the Lord will never allow His followers to suffer. The *Tirunaṟaiyūr hymn* (93) points out that, that holy place is the favourite resort of the Lord. In the *Puttūr hymn,* he addresses the Lord as the purest and the most beautiful. In the *Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai hymn* (66), he speaks of the various stories of the Lord inspiring him to take refuge in Him. In the *Iṭaimarutu hymn* (60), he condemns himself and begs of the Lord to show him a way of escape. In the *Nākēccuram hymn* (99) he raises a series of questions about the inner meaning of His *purāṇic* activities. In the *Kalayanallūr hymn* (16), he describes a few *purāṇic*

stories and concludes that *Kalayanallūr* is the favourite place of the Lord. Thus, greater emphasis is placed on the temple cult in these *hymns* in addition to that popular appeal because of the stories narrated. In other cases they are *hymns* of self surrender emphasizing the beauty, purity and the Grace of the Lord.

III

In this period, our poet was probably engaged himself in political life but his has not been a happy life that way. The *Tiruppukalūr hymn* condemns the patrons and chiefs of his times and begs of the poets to place their reliance on God rather than these men of no worth. In that *hymn* our poet states that the Lord is One that gives us food and cloth. Once again, it must be remembered that our poet is not addressing beggars but emphasizing the fact that the Lord is the moving force of the whole universe and as such the Giver of all, even to the kings of this world and of the Heavens. As against these kings, our poet feels that the Lord is the real prince—*Nampi.*

IV

Our poet exaggerates his own shortcomings, probably because of the contrast between the divine vision which he is blessed with the state of the world in which he lives. Or, he is identifying himself with the shortcomings of others. He, however, asserts that he never forgets the Lord and that God has come into his mind. He accuses that even if the Lord forgets him, he will not forget the Lord. The saints usually speak of the two ways of the Lord coming to save us: one is the way of the cat which of its own accord takes care of its kitten; the other is the way of the monkey where the young one of its own accord has to embrace forcibly its mother. Our poet has spoken of the Lord of his own accord like the cat coming and saving him, but when he is overburdened with the miseries of the world all round, he speaks of the way of the monkey though he does not mention that word. There is the fear of death emphasized—probably the starting point of his message of release from *karma* and misery. He speaks of the Lord as the beginning of everything, as the most wonderful principle, as the embodiment of *Dharma,* as his friend and *Guru.* He is beyond the reach of the Great, though near to His followers. The poet is often emphasizing the beauty and the purity of the Lord.

V

There is one great assertion made by our poet that God cannot be proved objectively. He is one to be experienced. This reminds us of *Ñana Campantar* :

"Ētukkaḻālum eṭutta moḻiyālum mikku-c
Cōtikka vēṇṭā cuṭarviṭṭuḷaṉ eṅkaḷ cōti
Mātukkam nīṅkaḷ uṟuvīr maṉampaṟṟi vāḻmiṉ
Cātukkaḷ mikkīr iṟaiyē vantu cārmiṉkaḷē".[1]

VI

In these *hymns* our poet refers specifically to *Campantar* and *Appar* to whose school he belongs. He also refers to other saints like *Ēyarkōṉ* and *Kōṭpuli.* The worship according to the *Vēdas* by the Brahmins of *Vīḻimiḻalai, Kalayanallūr* and *Valivalam* is emphasized. Worshipping the Lord, at *sandhi* or morning and evening with water and leaves and with words, actions and thought, the *trikaraṇas,* is also referred to. Our poet also mentions the sacred *mantra Praṇava.* The *pañcagavya* is mentioned more than once. The worship of the Lord in His universal form and as assuming the *Aṣṭamūrta* or the eight forms is again and again emphasized. More than all these, the worship through self-sacrifice and through musical compositions, is the unique method of worship which our poet follows. Our poet mentions five kinds of followers in the *Tiruvalivalam hymn*: (1) *Pallaṭiyār,* the numerous followers serving in various ways; (2) *Pattar* or the lovers who sing and dance; (3) *Cērntavar,* those who are in communion with Him; (4) *Nallaṭiyār* to whom He is the treasure in times of trouble and (5) *Vallaṭiyār* to whom He is their very desire.

VII

He speaks of *Śivalōkam* very often in these *hymns.* It may be taken as referring to the highest spiritual state or the highest heavens. Attaining the *Śivalōka* is the goal of the *Śaivites.* He also speaks of it as *Paralōka,* the highest world and as *Imaiyavar ulaku,* the world of the eternals. The last verses of his *hymns* give us the result which will flow from a recitation of his *hymns.*

1. 3: 54: 5.

In *hymn* No. 76, he begs of the *bhaktas* to recite his *hymn* probably because he feels that mere recitation itself is a divine joy. The recitation of the *hymn* will take the *bhaktas* beyond the contraries to the great beyond. They will rule the universe devoid of all miseries. The biggest spiritual experience is described as an embodiment of beauty, love and harmony completely free from *karmas* and miseries. God is described as nectar and light. He is the medicine for our *karma.*

VIII

Our poet has an eye for the beauty of the places both natural and artistic. This time the river is *Aricil.* He does not even forget the crabs and the children. He describes the places as Heaven on earth, full of dance, harmony and joy, women, beautified by monkeys and fish, flowers and birds. Sometimes these descriptions of nature seem to be but reflections of human life. Sometimes they appear as reflections of the activities of the Lord, especially the acts of the Lord's destruction turning out in the end as His blessing. In other places they appear more and more like the worship of the followers.

CHAPTER VIII

TIRUKKŌḶILI

(*Hymn* 20)

I

After *Ārūrar* had sung the Tiruttoṇṭattokai *hymn* where he fell at the feet of the servants of the servants of the Lord, according to *Cēkkiḻār, Nampi Ārūrar* sings the *Tirukkōḷili hymn,* where he begs the Lord to give him some labourers for transporting the paddy he received at *Tirukkōḷili* to the house of *Paravai* at *Tiruvārūr*. This juxtaposition brings out clearly *Ārūrar's* realization of divinity of labour.

The story speaks of a mountain of paddy. *Nampi Ārūrar* himself speaks of only *'cila nel'* (1, 3, 4, 6, 8)—a small quantity of paddy. But this is only a modest way of referring to the gift. If it was a very small quantity there was no necessity for any labourer at all.

Ārūrar's complete self-surrender to the Lord is seen in this *hymn*. Except unto the Lord, he does not turn to any one else for anything which he wants. He makes this appeal from a universal point of view; for he addresses the Lord as one who has become the whole universe as beyond the reach of even the *Dēvās* (9). If the Lord has become the universe the suffering of every individual including that of *Ārūrar* and *Paravai* is the suffering of the Lord. But it is curious that the poet does not whisper a word of his own suffering or his want.

II

He refers to *Paravai,* the damsel of the sword-like eye and to her fatigued, famished and starving condition: *"Vāṭi varuntāmē"* —(1); *"Paci varuttam"*—(6); *"Vāṭukiṉṟāḷ"*—(8); *"Varuttam"*—(3). It is not clear whether the sorrowful feelings of Paravai are purely one of her own hunger; for though in one place he refers to hunger, this reference, in other places, to her plight, must be something more than her individual need. It must be the wants of her household consisting a number of *Nampi Ārūrar's* followers

or of those whom she as a housewife has to feed when approached. It is because of this that *Ārūrar* has to transport an appreciable quantity of paddy with the help of labourers. This explains the great Tamilian conception that the duty of running the household is that of the lady of the house, '*illāḷ*', a word for which there is no corresponding word in the masculine gender. If it is the feeding of his own retinue of followers or those who resort to his house, one can understand *Ārūrar* making this universal appeal to the Lord.

Reference to *Paravai* brings to *Ārūrar's* mind the mythological description of the Lord. If *Ārūrar* is wedded to *Paravai,* the Lord is wedded to *Umai* and therefore ought to know the sufferings of women (6). (According to one reading it is '*Nātar Nallār*' whilst according to another reading it is '*Mātar Nallāḷ*' (3). According to the latter reading *Paravai* alone is referred to. Apparently the former reading is merely a general statement about the sufferings of women. Because in other verses he refers only to *Paravai,* it is better to take it in the latter sense). What more, one wife occupies a part of His body, while the other He places inside His matted hair (3). Not only that. The Lord goes a-begging (5) and, therefore, must know the pangs of hunger. Sub-consciously, the thought, that he was after all making a request on behalf of his own wife whilst renunciation is praised as a higher ideal, must have been working in his mind and inspiring another thought that the wedded life was equally divine. This makes him explain: "What have I to say about you? Has anyone raised any commotion about you when you embraced *Umā* and placed her on your left?" (4). Therefore, he feels that married life is, according to divine dispensation, a faithful reflection of divinity representing the combination of knowledge and love, law and Grace.

III

He refers to two other mythological stories, the story of *Tripuradahana* (2) and the crushing of *Rāvaṇa* (8), stories which not only point out that the Lord removes obstructions but takes pity on these very obstructionists themselves, converting them at the end to become recipients of divine blessing. Perhaps these suggest his request to God to remove the obstructions to a smooth sailing domestic life. In addition to his belief, that these obstructions are failures, he takes them as many stepping stones to divine blessing.

IV

His mind is captivated by the natural beauty of *Tirukkōḷili* in the midst of rich pastural tracts (4), (5), (10), surrounded by paddy fields, full of crystal clear water (2, 9) wafted into ripples. He is equally impressed with the art of man who has built palatial buildings looking as though made of pure gold (7). This is the place of the temple where he begs the Lord to take pity (8) on him and to show his love (7). He is also impressed with the beauty of the place *Kuṇṭaiyūr* where he has received the paddy, a place surrounded by gardens of spotless beauty (3) full of doll-like *kurava* flowers (6), where the monkeys jump and play (8) in the midst of a beautiful pastoral tract (4).

V

He assures the Lord that he worships and praises Him every day contemplating on Him for a long time and that he always thinks of Him and none else (1). Therefore, this *hymn* ought not to be looked upon as a private and selfish request for paddy, but as a *hymn* of self-surrender to the Lord who is the beginning of everything—'*Ātiyē*' (3) and the most wonderful principle—'*Arpu-taṉ*' (3) which has become this universe '*Aṇṭamatāyavaṉē*' (2) the innermost principle which sustains the universe, relying on which principle, our poet prays for every one of our needs, even as the Christians pray, "Give us our daily bread", a prayer offered not only by the beggar but also by the Emperor. It is because this *hymn* is made from this universal point of view, realizing the truth and the power of the inner principle, that *Nampi Ārūrar* concludes his last verse that those who master this *hymn* will remove the miseries of the world and rule the world (10)—"*Allal kaḷaintulakiṉ Aṇṭar Vāṉulakāḷpavarē*" (10). (There are two readings—'*Aṇṭarvāṉ* and *Aṇṭavāṉ*.).

TIRUNĀṬṬIYATTĀṈKUṬI

(*Hymn* 15)

I

The *Naṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi hymn* reveals more of the personality of *Nampi Ārūrar*. It is in this *hymn* we have the reference to the *Śaivite* Saint and Chieftain, *Kōṭpuli,* one of the saints of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* This reference shows *Nampi Ārūrar's* friendship with the Chieftains of the day and the part played by him in the political world of his day. In coming to *Nāṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi* of a political chieftain, our poet's mind chooses to address the Lord as the great Prince *'Nampi'* in every one of the verses of this *hymn.* The kings and chieftains are there to rule on behalf of the Great Being or the Prince whom they have to crown. God is the Lord, the King. He is the king who resides in the *Pāccil* of the west—*"Kuṭappāccil uṟai Kō"* (6). He is the Lord of the *Dēvas*—*"Amararkaḷ Talaivā"* (7).

II

Nampi Ārūrar has grown into a father with all the necessary worldly experience. It is here that he speaks of himself as the father of *Ciṅkaṭi* (10). We had occasion to discuss the reference in narrating the life of *Ārūrar.*

'Nampi' suggests its similarity to *'Tampi'*. *'Nampi'* is derived by *Naccinārkkiṉiyar* from *'Nam'*. It means 'Our Brother' as addressed by the King. *Nampi* was a title usually assumed by Royal Princes and conferred on those who are great like the Royal Princes, when a landed estate called *'Nampi Pēṟu'* and a golden flower *'Nampi-Pū'* were to be given as insignia. Because of the unique greatness of the people holding this title, it has come to mean the best of men. The *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators always interpret the word as *'Pūrtti Uṭaiyavar'* (the perfect) or *'Nirvāhakan'* (the Lord). Therefore, we may interpret the term *Nampi* as our perfect Prince.

III

This *hymn* is important as showing his pre-occupation with the mythological stories and descriptions of *Śiva*—stories and descriptions which at the first flush excite fear and revulsion, the stories about the ornaments of serpents (1), and white skull (3), the crescent laurel on the ruddy mat-lock (3), about the midnight dance on the burning ghat (2) and the graveyard (1), about the company of the Mother (3), about the ride on the bull (9) and the pilgrimage of beggary (8), about the singing of the *Vēdas* (6) and about the feast of poison (3) and the conquest of Death (6). He feels that these express in a way his inexpressible experience of Godhead. He, therefore, protests, "I shall not deride your Dance" (1); "I shall steal it all" (2); "I shall not speak ill of your life of beggary" (8); "I shall not abuse you even if you ride on the cow (bull)" (8); "I am not afraid of the serpents" (1). "It is a beauty, this harmonious commingling of the serpents and the crescent moon" (7). "His is a divine form (*Tippiya Mūrti*—2)". "He is the gem beautiful of the colour of the precious carbuncle stone" (2 & 3).

IV

This kind of thought excites him to express his confidence in God. "I am capable of serving you without any fear. What shall I desire for?" (3) he exclaims, suggesting he wants nothing but the Lord. "You may not care but I realize your greatness" (1). "You are the Supreme Being—*Paramēṭṭi*" (3). He is sure there is no more birth for him, but still he exclaims, he will never forget the Lord (1). "Even if the Lord forgets him he shall not forget Him" (12)—such is his resolution. "You may not care to see me but I am able to see you with my mind's eye. You may not think of me but I shall not leave off singing your praises" (1). "I shall not like anyone, except yourself" (2). "I shall not press hard on anyone else except you" (8). "Even if you do not love me, I will love you and I am happy with you. I have come to serve you not for suffering" (7). "Even if you are not attached to me I am attached to you" (5). "You may walk away from me but I shall walk (to the very end of the universe) to reach your feet" (6). "I do not know anything but you. Even if the heretics by their mean acts achieve anything, even if I see their success with my own eyes, I shall not think of it as of any worth" (9).

"I have seen your followers worshipping you and serving all and (therefore) I am also worshipping you so that my *karmas* may take leave of me" (9). The usual method of worship, the *abhiṣēka* or bath of milk, curd and ghee of the *Pañcagavya* is also mentioned (6).

"In exercise of the best of my thinking power or faculty or as long as my mind acts I have resolved to reach the target fixed up for being aimed at. I thought of being saved and have taken refuge in your feet" (7). "I, the slave, have become the slave of those who had taken refuge in your feet. But yet, I shall not cease singing your praises. I have befriended you so as to realize you through my songs and quests after you. Therefore, I cannot forget you" (5).

All these assertions do not mean that *Nampi Ārūrar* has not realized the loving aspect of God. "O, Lord of the pure and divine form, pray tell me how you have entered and continued to stay in my mind—I, who am the meanest of the mean. Having placed (one) in the midst of suffering, you are capable of removing those miseries" (2).

Nor is he oblivious of his own shortcomings which as usual he exaggerates. "It is not that I have not been educated. I read and learnt many things except your greatness and my servitude. It is not that I cannot stand firm in any undertaking. But I cannot think of the right path of those who are firmly established in your path. I cannot praise your feet of gold. I cannot think of the future. Yes, I am good to no one but yourself" (4).

V

A rich life—political and social, domestic and public, religious and spiritual—is full of varied experiences and conflicting situations, creating problems. *Nampi Ārūrar,* who has taken the Lord as his friend, philosopher and guide, is sure of God's help but when trying situations arise, in the midst of his certainty of Lord's love he feels as though God is loosening His hold because of his imperfections, but only to make *Ārūrar* to tighten his own grip on the Lord. It is the complicated situation that is reflected in this poem. He says that he is proud (or happy or in the midst of pomp—*kaḷiyēṉ*) but he asserts that on deeper consideration, this human life when thought of as something substantial, draws out but tears from his eyes. Therefore, he says, "I cannot but fall

at your feet even forcibly—even against your wish. I shall not worry any one but you" (8). "I shall not recount my miseries and blame you stating that you have caused me to suffer all that I have undergone though they are not to be experienced by me". ("Because they have to be undergone according to my *karma,* I shall not blame you that you have made me suffer these miseries which I have experienced"—this is another interpretation) (6).

The Mythological stories seem to express this truth. What appear to be cruel, frightful and mean, seem to be all love on further consideration. The Hound of the Heaven is but our beloved and none else. He is indeed so loving—He is the cool showers or the clouds so dear to the people of South India (6).

VI

In this spirit of humility, the poet notes even the tiny crab playing in the fields of the city which has the groves as its fence (9). Having given expression to his conflicting emotions, he feels relieved and whole, sinless and pure. This inspires him to advise the *Bhaktas* to recite this song of a *hymn* even if they were not accustomed to sing hitherto—for he feels sure that such a recitation will completely wipe out their sins (10).

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CHAPTER X

TIRUVALIVALAM

(*Hymn* 67)

I

The Tiruvalivalam *hymn* gives another vision of the Lord which *Nampi Ārūrar* had. *Cēkkiḻār* calls this *'Eṅkum nikaḻnta Tamiḻ mālai'*[1] or the universal *hymn. Nampi Ārūrar* explains herein his own experience of God, sometimes as something personal, sometimes as something universal. Every verse ends with the assertion, "I have come to *Valivalam* and have seen the Lord". He explains in the rest of the verses how he had experienced the Lord. "He is the very breath in the body and yet He stands in the form of *'Ōm'* becoming all the Universe" (1). Thus our poet explains God as the inner and the outer principle. "His munificence is immeasurable even unto those who have renounced everything looking at even the pleasures of heaven as bitter. He becomes the very light of the mind of His followers, springing up in their minds as the nectar by whose side the honey of their minds turn bitter" (1). Thus is expressed the subjective experience of the Absolute. The poet passes from this esoteric experience to its concrete representation in the image form. "He is the Lord capable of holding in His hand the deer" (1).

II

In the next verse, God is experienced as one who blesses His followers. Our poet speaks of five kinds of devotees: (*i*) First come the innumerable followers with their varied services and the Lord is full of sympathy for them. (*ii*) The *bhaktas,* those who are full of reverence and love for Him, sing and dance in divine ecstasy and the Lord is all love unto them. (*iii*) There are again those who walk in the narrow and strenuous path following the footsteps of old, never swerving therefrom even by a hair-breadth and reaching the goal. Success and freedom are created for them by the Lord. (*iv*) To the good or the great, He is like the wealth

1. P. P. *Ēyar.*, V 43.

or treasure in reserve, for times of trouble or misery. (*v*) There are the followers firm in their resolve, hard and unshakable as the mountain, like the saints of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* To them, He is the very desire of the heart. The poet hastens to include himself amongst those blessed by the Lord: "He blesses me knowing my own wants" (2).

III

In the next verse *Nampi Ārūrar* harps back to the truth of the Lord beyond the reach of all, though within the reach of the lovers. "His beginning and His end grow deeper and deeper, broader and broader and higher and higher, (never to be reached) but He is so close to those who fall at His feet". Who are these followers? "They are like other people of the world, sinners, all to start with, but transformed into saints, by the company of the Great. The stupid serve their family sustaining nothing but falsehood. They suffer and then their heart melts, they finally come and mix with the community of true *bhaktas.* Thus, they come to live and to them the Lord shows the unerring path." The poet combines his own redemption with the salvation of others: "He removed my blot even from my future birth"—All these seem to represent the inner meaning of the image from where *Śiva* is happy with *Umā* or the Mother Goddess (3).

"He is always my confidant, my guide, friend and philosopher. My tongue will not swerve from the path of singing your praises and it is so sweet like the nectar collected there to be oozing out" —thus he expresses his experience of his compositions. "This very Lord is He that is worshipped by innumerable and varied *Dēvas* taking refuge in Him. He is the great, unknown to *Tirumāl* and Brahma; though unknown to them, He had made me great" (4).

IV

Our poet thinks more about the importance ot music compositions. "The Lord enjoys most the praises sung in the *hymns* of *Campantar* and *Appar* and loves them to be repeated often and often". From this it has to be noted how in the time of *Nampi Ārūrar,* who followed *Campantar* and *Appar,* not at any distant date, the *hymns* of *Campantar* and *Appar* came to be sung by devotees with fervour and reverence and what high esteem *Nampi Ārūrar* himself had for the *hymns.* Our poet is giving in his *hymns* expression to those ideas of *Campantar* and *Appar.* "God knows my ignorance, the ignorance of a slave. He has made the

stone of my heart melt in love unto Him. He has shown me His victorious feet. He has removed the weeds and the obstacles". Who is He? "He is the Lord who stands firm while the *Dēvas* of great prowess worship round Him" (5).

Nampi Ārūrar gives us still more of his experience of the Lord saving and blessing him: "I know not to sing; and worship; I know not to praise thereby; I know not to go in quest of Him; I know not to get myself reformed thereby; I know not to walk in the path and to lead my mind therein. How am I to reach you, I cry. He showed distinctly the path and brought me thereto. He accepted me saying, 'Do not thou feel miserable and pine away in vain'." (6).

"He helps us to escape from the deep expanse of the sea of birth completely removing the taints of cruel *karma,* which holds fast and fetters us all. Communion with Him inspires a capacity in us for great service. He yokes us on to His service to amass the results of *tapas.* Those who had amassed like this can easily think or contemplate on Him and to them He opens the *Śivalōka* of His glorious feet to which he raised them. He is always inside the mind of those who worship Him"—thus our poet expresses his own experience though the verse is couched as expressing the objective truth about God (7).

V

"Innumerable *Dēvas, Ṛṣis* and kings and infinite number of people stand everywhere and praise Him and He blesses them with whatever they want. He stands firm so that those who take refuge in Him may rest in Him. He is the Grace overflowing unto these all. He is my *kaṟpaga* ocean, the ocean that will give anything that is wanted". I cried unto Him, "O, Lord! bless me!". "Thereafter He has snatched my soul and became one with my mind". In this way, the poet tries to make his experience a universal fact of God's Grace (8).

VI

The two verses that follow refer to the story of *Tripura, Rāvaṇa,* the feast of poison, the Mother Goddess and the *Kāpāli* form expressing in the language of mythology, the very great experience vouchsafed to *Nampi Ārūrar.* "He comes after every thing and goes before every thing, unknowable even unto the *Vēdic* scholars of kindness falling at His feet" (6). "It is im-

possible to bring in any evidence to prove His existence objectively. But, He is easy of reach and experience. To the minds which do not think of Him, He never reaches and He creates confusion therein" (10).

VII

Valivalam is praised as the place where the learned *Vēdic* scholars raise the sacrificial fire to reduce the evil powers of '*Kali*' (11). No other description is given of this place and this description is significant and to the point, emphasizing the spirit of sacrifice and the great light or the fire of sacrifice ever kept alive for the good of the Universe. This *hymn* is an outpouring of his heart, a sweet music of pure *Tamil*. The poet has known the elation he felt, when he sang this *hymn* and therefore assures the recitors of this *hymn* that those who can praise the Lord by singing these verses with all their heart and with all the bliss, will reach the world or place praised by even the *Dēvas* who know no suffering (11).

VIII

This *hymn*, therefore, gives us a picture of the spiritual development of *Nampi Ārūrar,* realizing God in his mind and in the Universe as a great principle of love, light and happiness, ever ready to help the fallen and the depraved—the great power worshipped by all, the fundamental principle preceding and following everything beyond the reach of all learning and power, though at the beck and call of the loving heart.

CHAPTER XI

TIRUPPUKALŪR

(*Hymn* 34)

I

The Tiruppukalūr *hymn* is addressed to the brother poets of his age. The poet has realized that God is the real moving force sustaining us all. This conviction flows in his very blood and as the result he advises others to rely upon God and none else for anything and everything. This is not a negation of activity but a realization of the inner truth of this universe.

II

We get a picture of the poets hovering about the patrons of the day. We have noticed *Ārūrar's* intimacy with the chieftains of the land and this *hymn* shows that he is sick of most of them. "You may praise them and depend on them but these cheats will not yield any benefit" (1). The usual praises showered on the patrons by these poets are in a sense caricatured in this *hymn* and therefore, we get a picture of the world of the patrons and their coterie of poets of the age. The powerful *Bhīma* (2), the victorious *Vijaya* (2), the munificent *Pāri* (2), the beautiful *Kāma* unto women (10), the glorious *Muruka* (10) are some of the descriptions of these patrons even when they do not possess an iota of qualification for being praised thus. Some are described as the learned (9), the perfect Lord of the lands and relatives (3), the lord of hospitality (8), the scion of the God family (6) and the mother unto poets (7). The old man may be praised as possessing shoulders like mountains (4), the cheat, the liar, the lawless, the wicked, the revellers in five great sins may be praised as saints, alas! to what purpose! (5). "The men who will search for the sesame seed who will not give an iota even unto the fly may be praised as great patrons but none of these will part with anything" (8). "Why then this futile attempt at pleasing the patrons and this prostitution of poetry?"

III

"What a beautiful place is this *Pukalūr!* The bulls plough the fields and the sacred birds scream" (3). "The fields are full of sweet fragrance (6), and the lotus proudly rises up its head" (11). "The owls in the hollow of a tree never cease to sing their songs" (9). "The buffaloes *rush into the tank*" (10). "Why then speak of any want in this place?" "Here and now, the Lord will give us our food and clothes" (1).

IV

This is the pleasure of prayer along with the destruction of misery. "In the next birth we can rule the *Śivalōka*" (1). "There is no doubt about this, our ruling the rising tiers of the worlds of *Dēvas*" (2) "becoming as it were their axle" (3), "ruling there as the king" (4), "as the father" (9) "as the leader" (10), "without any perplexity or obstacle or any fear of getting lost in the mire of a hell" (8). "All the sufferings of the mind will be removed and we all can be saved" (5). Our poet feels sure that those who recite this *hymn* of appeal to the scholars based on the truth of the sustaining principle of God—*Karma,* will reach the feet of the Lord who is in the form of Dharma (11).

V

Therefore, this *hymn* is a *hymn* on *Śiva's Dharma* or nature rather than a cheap promise of food and clothes—a *hymn* teaching the value of surrender to God, realizing that whatever we get is from Him. This *hymn* further falsifies the theory that Indian poets and philosophers are always other-worldly, losing the present world for the future. This *hymn* assures us in no unmistaken terms of the present and the future.

CHAPTRE XII

TIRUPPAṈAIYŪR

(*Hymn* 87)

I

The conviction which grew up into the message to the learned in the previous *hymn* develops in the *Tiruppaṉaiyūr hymn* into his exquisite joy resonating with the dance of the Lord sustaining the universe, a dance which he sees reflected in the buildings and natural beauty of *Tiruppaṉaiyūr,* a beauty which makes the poet exclaim at the end of every verse as if in chorus, "He is alone the Beautiful".

II

It is the dance of the divine form which is both masculine and feminine, a dance unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (7), which makes the followers also dance in beautiful harmony (1). The sacred ash (2), the beautiful crescent (3, 8), the laurel of a river (2), the fire (5), the deer (5) and the axe (5) in his hands, the victory over the elephant (6), the worship by the *Dēvas* and men (8), the crushing of *Rāvaṇa* (9), the *pañcagavya* bath (6) are all beautiful because of the underlying harmony of love. There arises the grandeur of moral beauty in this very form, for there overflows from it His Grace and compassion. His followers therefore dance (1). He dances within the mind of those who contemplate on Him (2), removing all their *karmas* rushing on them (3). He is capable of saving them, though cruel to the cruel and egoistic *Rāvaṇa*-like men (9).

III

The same harmony, dance and joy, our poet sees in *Tiruppaṉaiyur,* in those '*māṭamāḷikai, gōpuram* and *maṇṭapam*' growing as it were in the midst of groves in and around which the bees hum and sing in that city of fertile fields (1), of rich soil, on which grow the harmony of varied fragrant flowers, *viz., "ceṅkaḻu-nīr, mallikai, ceṇpakam"* (2). The ruddy eyed buffaloes, after having laboured hard in the fields, rush into the ponds and this

makes the smaller fish jump and dance in the fields (3). The dance continues. The sword-fish jumps, creating a commotion rather a fluttering or *gamaka* amidst other fishes which frisk into the fields surrounded by the beautiful arecanut palms (4). God's love takes the form of the Mother and we see her varied reflections in the damsels who bathe in the ponds making the water flowers usually blossoming at different times bloom in harmony at one and the same time (5), in that land of *Cōḻar* surrounded by the *Kāviri* —the land which sings the praises of that Ocean of love through the poets of *Tiruppaṉaiyūr* and through their ever expanding poetry (6). With the buffalo (3), the fish (4) and the damsels (5), the monkeys also dance on the *maṇṭapas, māṭas, māḷikais* and *gōpurams* (7) and the peacocks dance on trees (7) whilst the drums resound (8) everywhere and the music of the harp proceeds from the *māṭamāḷikai gōpurams* (8). This dance of happiness spreads everywhere whlist the monkey dances and jumps (9). The honey-comb bursts and overflows (10).

IV

The divine joy has coursed through every pore of his body, every part of his soul and his aesthetic experience of divine beauty makes our poet assure *the world that those who listen to and* enjoy these beautiful words of his, are indeed themselves but embodiments of beauty (10).

CHAPTER XIII

TIRUNANNILAM

(*Hymn* 98)

I

The ecstasy of experience in the harmony of God slowly starts to ebb away in the midst of the world of conflicts and dualities. The feeling of harmony is still there, but the conflict becomes more pronounced at the subsequent stage. The Lord, however, is aware of the conflict and the need of the message of the harmony, and comes down on this earth to save the prodigals and the stray lambs, incarnating Himself in forms of beauty, in the images and the architecture of the temples. It is because of this according to *Nampi Ārūrar*, that the great Lord of varied feats and flowing love has become fond of the great temple of *Naṉṉilam*.

II

The poet begins with the contraries in the physical world, *viz.*, heat and cold, the symbols of all dualities of the world resulting in happiness and misery—"*Taṇṇiyal vemmaiyiṉāṉ*" (1). Ye, He is the very harmony of the heat in the cold (according to another interpretation of the phrase) (1).

He is the beggar and clandestine lover and yet He is praised by the spiritual scholars of the righteous path (1). He woos two women and yet He is the ascetic of the mat-lock (2). He is the Lord of the *Pallava* capital, yet He loves the ordinary but sweet city of *Karuppūr* (3). He lives on alms but yet He is the Lord of all the Universe (3). He sings the highest truths of the *Vēdas* though a devil dancer (4). He kills *Jalandhara* with a discus; but He bestows the very same discus to the Lord of the Damsel of Earth, *i.e., Visṇu* (5). He is white with the ash but His throat is dark blue (6). His ruddy mat-lock hides a woman; yet He deprived *Brahma* of his greatness and head alike (6). He is the ascetic of the *koṉṟai* flower decked mat-lock but He carries the battle-axe and covers Himself with the skin of the elephant He flayed (7). His mat-lock is a harmony of conflicting objects,

the moon, flowers, serpent and the *Ganges* and He is the Lord of the Bull or *Dharma* (8). He fights with and blesses *Arjuna* (9). He crushes down *Rāvaṇa* and blesses him (10). Is not all this a vivid representation of His form of the Mother of Love and His form of Lordship—*Umāpati?* (10).

This is He who is fond of the great temple of *Naṉṉilam,* where come the great to fall at His feet and to praise Him (1); where the groves, like unto Him, reach the crescent moon, to adorn it, on their crown (2). There shines the harmony of plants and animals represented by the beautiful walk of the swan on the great lotus (7), the harmony of the varied flowers reflecting the divine harmony shining on the crown of the Lord (8) and the harmony of the festivities where throng the troupes of worldly relatives and the other-worldly *tapasvins* and *Śaivites* of our fold (9), the latter coming to serve with an outward form of strenous discipline but with an inward form of love, very much like the Lord going to *Arjuṉa* (9). This is the place where the temple was built by the great *Cōḻa* King *Ceṅkaṇāṉ,* the Lord of the *Kāviri* whose devastating flood was conquered and dammed so that it could be blissful in feeding the world (10) as another symbol of harmony, reflecting *Śiva* vanquishing and blessing *Rāvaṇa* (10).

Vēdic scholars pray and worship (1,6) but anything is good for performing His loving worship, any green leaf and pure water (3). The worshippers take refuge in His feet with all their heart praising Him with many *hymns,* raising up their hands above their crown (4)—the trinity of thought, speech and art in the harmonious unity of worship. The poet is sure of the redemption of the world; The Lord becomes the very crown of the followers, the crown of those who contemplate on Him with a heart melting in love (3).

III

The riddle of contradictions has been solved in the very form of the Lord and the love of the Absolute. Our poet giving expression to this has gone beyond the sphere of contraries to the divine bliss of harmony and he feels that those who master this *hymn* will similarly enter like him, the great Beyond (11).

CHAPTER XIV

TIRUVĪḺIMIḺALAI

(*Hymn* 88)

I

The conflicts of the world gain upper hand in our poet's mind. When he turns worldward they become inescapable, except through the Grace of God. He, however, sees in the world the saved souls who remain unperturbed in the midst of these miseries and he, therefore, cries to the Lord, "Will you not bless me even as you have blessed others?" He is indeed himself a saved soul but the world is still too much with him, tantalizing him whenever the old habits of thoughts occur and hence this cry of his. But even this cry implies his strong conviction of the conquest, by the chosen few, of the contradictions and miseries of the world.

II

Tiruvīḻimiḻalai is the very heaven on earth. It is the Heaven with its towers of lions descending on this world (2), where come and dance even now the dancing girls of Heaven whilst *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* stand worshipping Him (4). It is not for merely resolving the contradictions and dualities that He is here in this temple. It is the greatness of the worshippers here that draws Him there (9), etc.

Tiruvīḻimiḻalai is a colony of a class of Brahmins, who fill the whole of that place (6,7). *Tiruvicaippā* of *Cēntaṉār* (2-8) speaks of the 500 of *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai* even as others speak of the 3000 of *Tillai.* These with others worked for the Hindu revival as against the *Buddhists* and *Jains* whose stronghold was asceticism. The *Digambara Jains* went a step further, refusing salvation to women. As against this, the *Tēvāram* praises the devinity of women and the holiness of the right kind of domestic life (1). It is here that *Śiva's* form of *Umāpati* and *Ardhanārīśvara* become significant (1,2,3), the very forms which receive worship at *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai.* The contemplation of this form takes a firm hold in the minds of these Brahmins enabling them to protect the world from the evils of *Kali age* (2). What is more, in the sacrifice, they

perform—the sacrifice which is the home of the sacred *Vēdas*—the poet sees shining their women glorious like *Lakṣmī,* the Goddess of Wealth and Beauty (1). *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai* is great because of this beauty (1, *etc.*). Is not this the very message of the life of *Nampi Ārūrar?*

Brahmins as the worshippers of God are further described. They are *Antaṇar* (1,6,7), those of beautiful and loving character who bless those that have faith in them, in short, they are the *gurus.* They have obtained harmony, peace and repose (*Taṇinta Antaṇar*—7); they have mastered the *Vēdas* (6); they sit on the edge of the sacrifice where they kindle the holy fire with a fire drill (9). They are the Brahmins of the *Vēdas,* reciting the *Vēdas* and following the morality of the *Vēdas* (10). Social service is not foreign to them. There is the rosy hand of righteousness and munificence (4). In their strong palatial residence wealth abounds (7). It is a characteristic feature of the place where even the dark groves of flowers shower drops of honey (6).

Tillai 3000 are reputed to be identical with *Śiva* and it looks that *Nampi Ārūrar* is identifying the Brahmins of *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai,* those who become great and worship the Lord, with *Śiva* who rides the chariot to destroy the three castles of the air' (5). Their mind remains firm in Him (2). They contemplate on Him as the creator of all fetters and salvation, a great deceipt, that way (4). They daily perform the ceremonial worship out of Love (6). Every day at the *sandhi* worship, at dusk, they shower flowers on Him, which the Lord adorns Himself with all grandeur (7). There are other descriptions of the Lord which may be taken as the forms which these worshippers contemplate on. The Lord comes within the body and becomes its very life. He is the three great lights (3). He is fond of the honeyed bath of *Pañcagavya* and clear water (3). He is fond of the begging surrounded by the ghosts (8). His deer (3), battle-axe (3), His consort (1,3), His beggary (9), the dstruction of the three castles (5) are all mentioned; but of all these the begging tour seems to be very important; for the poet says, 'to those who seek the esoteric significance, the Lord shines as the greatest truth' (9).

The *Vīḻi* Brahmins are thus the beacon lights for those groping in the darkness and misery. Our poet's mind has become chastened by the worship of the saints of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* The thought of

Śiva's followers has been peeping in here and there in the previous *hymns.* In the *Vīḻi hymn,* it becomes the central idea. Their example encourages him to cringe at the feet of the Lord for a similar redemption. The Brahmins of the place suggest other saints *Arjuna* (7), *Baghīrata* (7), *Caṇḍi* (6) and *Kaṇṇappar* (6) to whom the Lord has assigned a high rank. They are mentioned specifically whilst others are generally grouped under the terms *Bhaktas* and *Siddhas* (6,7). That the ghosts of the burning ghat represent the *Śaiva* followers has been explained elsewhere. The great form of worship our poet likes most is as explained by *Cēkkiḻār "Arccaṉai pāṭṭu", i.e.,* the worship with the musical *hymns.* Therefore, he is reminded of his leaders in this line, the two great saints *Appar* and *Campantar,* whose songs the Lord was so fond of, that He gave them gold coins at *Vīḻi* (8).

III

This *hymn* thus expresses the poet's way of looking at the communion which the *Bhaktas* have with the Lord and, therefore, according to him those, who recite these lines of good *Tamiḻ* of our poet of *Nāvalūr* where even the bees hum the music of supreme *'nāda'* are sure to achieve the same communion with the Supreme (10).

CHAPTER XV

TIRUVĀÑCIYAM

(*Hymn* 76)

I

The reverence for the '*toṇṭars*' who are often looked upon as the very form of the Lord, leads to the conception of *Śiva* as the great saint and *guru,* the great Lord of all, which in turn brings back the idea of His being the only refuge and His hastening to remove our sufferings. In the *Tiruvāñciyam hymn,* the idea of the Lord as '*Aṭikaḷ*' (1,2,3,4,5,8) becomes the heart of the song—six verses at least mention the word—and as such we are told that He will not allow the inescapable hard law of *karma* to inflict on His followers (1,6,8).

II

Those who contemplate on His feet of shining lotus are never inflicted by *karma.* He is the true medicine for the disease of *karma* or the nectar bringing back life from the cultches of fatal *karma* (6). He is the only One who can do this (1). His resounding victorious feet alone are our refuge (7)—none else will we consider as our Lord (9)—He of the sacred thread (1), of the blue throat (5), the consort of the Mother (1,5,9), who is the very embodiment of love, the great fighter (3), the destroyer of the three cities (3), the archer aiming at *Arjuna* (3), the Supreme Lord coming surrounded by the ghosts (6), the unknowable even unto the two (7)—these descriptions of the *purāṇas* are enumerated for emphasizing this great truth, for, as pointed out, these stories have an inner significance. His blotless ash has an esoteric meaning (2); it represents the great idea of purity in which ends everything and therefore, He never leaves off this extraordinary act of besmearing ash (4). The ash reminds the poet of (the ashlike pollen dust of) '*kaitai*' plant whose sweet fragrance fills this holy place (5) which that way reflects the Lord of the ashes. The commingling of the moon and the serpent is His characteristic feature (5). One end of His gembedecked girdle of a serpent has many a head, a symbol of the

evolution of many from one (3). Thus our poet's preoccupation with the *purāṇic* stories is made clear even by this *hymn.*

III

The idea of the saints is not forgotten in this *hymn*—these men full of the riches of God's Grace (1). Has he not described Appar, *"Tiruniṉṟa cemmaiyē cemmaiyāk koṇṭa Tirunāvukkaraiyaṉ".*[1] They fall at His feet and praise Him and He shines in that glory (1), in that beautiful city of towers of ever-growing perfection (6), and holy ponds of spacious lotuses and crystal clear water (3). He is worthy of the sight by those whose mind harbours no vegeance (2). The Lord, the Saint and the *Guru* explains the universe as a vision to the saints of pure and unsullied heart.

IV

This *hymn* suggests various reflections of real life, seen as a poetic vision of that holy place of nature, beautiful. The bull from the cattleshed bellows; frightened by this thundering noise the sword-fish in the field runs away only to scare and drive out the carps for taking refuge in the lotus (2). The white flower of the *vaḷḷai* creeper on the bank is mistaken for the crane by the tiny fish and in terror and confusion it leaps into the mouth of the sword fish, (as though it were its hiding place) (4). The streams flow incessantly into the fields and there bloom the *'kuvaḷai'* flower—like the eyes of the damsels, keeping guard over the crops (7). Their song for scaring away the birds by its very music invites the tiny birds and the parrots to swarm around them and what is more wonderful, this mad rush of the birds scares away the crane and other water birds of the moat in which, therefore, the stout fish leap with joy, now free from their enemies (7). The fields near the thrashing floors feed the bees with their overflowing honey and they intoxicated, sing with all their heart, the song of their pride which echoes in the heavens (8)—ah! what a beautiful sight! (8). Thanks to the tanks, the *cuckoo,* (like *Dakṣiṇāmūrti*) frequents the cool shades of the banyan tree (8). The apes dividing amongst themselves the sweet plantain fruits and the honeyed jack fruits remonstrate

1. 7: 39: 4.

and fight, over the inequalities of the divided shares with the trunk of the plaintain and the *'tāḻai'* (9). Are these not, in more senses than one, reflections of human life seen from a remote distance and unconcerned height. Looked at from the heights of divinity this world of delusion and passion rushing with mad speed to escape from the divine blessings showered on it appears as so much poetry and romance.

V

Our poet is so much overpowered with the expression of his poetry that he begs of the *Bhaktas* to sing this *hymn* of a garland, because he feels that singing is itself a bliss, revealing the working of the inner principle of God within this universe.

CHAPTER XVI

TIRUNAṞAIYŪRC CITTĪCCARAM

(*Hymn* 93)

I

In the *Tirunaṟaiyūrc Cittīccaram hymn,* the *hymn* on the temple of the *Siddhas,* the mythological stories and descriptions of *Śiva* are enumerated—the mat-lock of the river, the flowers, the moon and the serpent (1), the flaying of the elephant to appease His beloved (2), the destruction of the three cities (3), the crushing down of *Rāvaṇa* (4), the stealing of the hearts of the damsels (5), His beggary (6), His handling of the deer, fire and the battle-axe (8), the feast of poison (7), the discomfiture of *Dakṣa* (9), the conquest of Death (10)—all emphasizing as usual, love as harmony, and power as Grace, and destruction as salvation.

II

Where does He reside? A befitting description follows of a heaven on earth and, therefore, after giving expression to this vision of the mundane abode of the Lord — our poet is certain that those who master this *hymn* will reach the Heaven of beauty (11).

III

Nature seems to be a mirror reflecting God and His company. The meandering stream throwing to the shore, gold and precious stones remind the poet of the crawling serpent of the Lord (1). The frightened Mother Goddess is reflected in the damsels with bangles, enjoying their bath in the stream (2). Even the destruction of the three cities and the crushing down of *Rāvaṇa* are but acts of love and, therefore, these remind us only of reflection of the Mother Goddess in the faces of the ladies of the place, in the midst of lotuses of honey blossoming as though awakening fully from sleep (3). His sporting with the damsels and begging tour are but episodes of love and beauty, best fitted for a poetic spot or background where in the rich waters the fish

frisk about making the sweet flowers full of the sweetness of the overflowing honey (5) yield up their fragrance and where (*Śiva*-like) grove stands crowned with the moon of the heavens (6).

Feasting on the poison, the Lord stands with the River-Maid sneaking into His mat-lock and this is reflected in the royal roads of the city where move the chariots in the midst of the flocking damsels (7). He is the Lord of the weapons whose significance is great and, therefore, the spiritual scholars of this place in quest of God learn the full significance of these words (8). The discomfiture of *Dakṣa* was so much festivity for the Lord and in this city, in its festivity resound to the Heavens, the song, the flute and the drum (9). The conquest of Death is no breach of the established law and, therefore, there crowd in the city those who follow the law of divine Will, never swerving from the righteous path (10). Thus we get here a description of an ideal city of material prosperity and fertility, of feminine beauty and chastity, of mystic experience and moral grandeur, reflecting in all its natural beauty Śiva of the *Purāṇas* which is so full of mystic significance.

ARICIṞKARAIPPUTTŪR

(*Hymn* 9)

I

A description of the beauty of the holy city was attempted in the previous *hymn.* Holiness and beauty are not separable. This implication of the previous *hymn* is made explicit in this *hymn* on *Aṟiciṟkaraipputtūr,* the new city on the banks of *Aricil,* the river. The conception of beauty of the divine harmony and the purity of the unselfish divine love have been growing steadily in the previous two *hymns.* This *hymn* of *Puttūr* delivers this truth as the important message. God is spoken of as Beauty and Purity in its alternate verses respectively (See the introductory part of our thesis following the suggestion of *Campantar's hymn* on this temple. This is the very message and importance of the *purāṇic* stories.

II

The flaying of the elephant (1), the destruction of the three cities (1), the ride on the bull (1), the begging tour (1, 8), the eightfold form (3), the worship by the *Dēvas* (5), the destruction of *Dakṣa's* sacrifice (7), His lady-love (the Mother), and the *Ganges* (9), His ornaments of serpents (8, 9) and bones (9), and the feast of poison (10) are described in relation to the beauty aspect of the Lord. The nipping of *Brahma's* head (2), *Vishṇu's* worship (2), the destruction of the three cities (1, 4) and of *Kāma* (4) the bestowing of His blessing upon *Pukaḻttuṇai Nāyaṉār* (6), His grave dance (8), and His ornaments of serpents (8) are thus mentioned with reference to both the aspects and this gives a clue to the correct understanding of the message. The beauty is the beauty of harmony, an expression of divine Grace and unselfish love and, therefore, it becomes the moral beauty of purity. What appears to be two different aspects on surface are found to be one and the same at bottom. The last verse, therefore, refers only to divine purity (11). These mythological stories have this meaning and that is why the poet asks, "Why this and

what for?" (4, 5, 7, 8, 9). The language of mythology helps him, therefore, to deliver the message to the world, easily and impressively and in a fitting manner in a language used by the devotee classes.

III

The verses addressing the Lord as the Beautiful (1,3,5,7,9,10) couple Him as such with the beautiful city of *Tirupputtūr* on the bank of the *Aricil,* whose floods the poet describes at length, whilst the verses addressing the Lord as the Pure (2,4,6,8,11) have no such description, but after the enumeration of the *purāṇic* feats of the Lord they all exclaim, "You are the only pure One of *Puttūr,* full of groves". It looks as though there is an inter connection between the Beauty and the description of the river, suggesting perhaps that the floods reflect this Beauty.

The Lord flays the elephant, destroys the three cities and goes a-begging at every door; the flood tumbles up tusks of elephants and horns of stag, tossing up hither and thither the peacock feather and the *'akil',* only to reach through the river our city (and our homes) (1). If the Lord cut away the head of Brahma to beg therewith, (2, 3) the flood breaks down the sandal tree with its leaves along with the bamboo, carrying them all with its noisy hands of waves and dashing and collecting them against the banks even as the beggar gathers alms little by little (3). Here also Nature is described in such a way as to suggest, it is a mirror held up before God.

The begging tour amidst the loving souls contemplating which the Great become chastened, is reflected in the flood where rush in, the varieties of fish making the smaller fish jump up in groups whilst the swan observing this, feels miserable at first and thereafter becomes chastened (5). The destruction of the sacrifices of *Dakṣa* is reflected in the destructive flood which pushing along the peeping feathers of peacock and cardamom carries along the gems, pearls, and gold (7). The Lord of the Mother and the Ganges adorning Himself with the serpents, bones and ashes is reflected in the flood robbing on its way the sugar-canes and the fruits of the plantains and the arecanut palms, and calling all to share this booty at the beautiful city of *Puttūr* (9). The feast of poison seems to be reflected also in the flood which seems to be forcibly drawing the thundering clouds to rain, whilst the stream

which runs on either sides, beats against the banks with its resounding hands of waves (10)—a war on the two banks, throwing up the bamboos and *akil* carried in the stream after the showers of the dark cloud (11).

In some cases, it is very difficult to explain how the particular description of the flood can be the particular description or reflection of the Lord. If the message is understood, there will be no difficulty. The cruel and frightful feats of the Lord turn out to be acts of the unselfish love intended to save the very person seemingly destroyed. So does the devastating flood appear as cruel and destructive whilst in reality it is the flow of love coming to feed us all. The suggestive force behind the description of the flood beautifully brings out the esoteric meaning of the mythological stories. God is not merely All Power and Cruelty, but also a Beggar at our doors hungering for love. The importance of this begging inspires the poet to mention it often and often (1, 3, 5).

IV

The contemplation of the saints is another trend of his *hymns* and their worship is not here forgotten. The worship of *Viṣṇu* and his self-sacrifice (2) and of the starving *Pukalttuṇai* (6) are elaborated in two different verses of his *hymn*. They give us their all to win His unselfish love.

V

The Lord is the purest and the most holy. The joy of beauty arises out of our love and this conception of beauty is our experience of that purity. Beauty thus is an aesthetic experience and takes form in the expression of the great Truth which is Purity—a subjective experience of the Absolute—a poet's vision or a vision of the mystic—unique as the vision of a particular mystic soul expressed in its language giving an expression and a poet's organic form to the inexpressible Truth. *"Tiruppputtūrp puṉitartammai ...... alakāl uraippār"*—this is very important in explaining this *aesthetic theory* of *Nampi Ārūrar*. Beauty is heavenly; Purity is divine. Therefore, according to our poet, those who can experience aright aesthetically this *hymn*, will along with the beauty loving denizens of heaven reach the *Śivalōka* of purity.

CHAPTER XVIII

TIRUVĀVAṬUTUṞAI

(*Hymn* 66)

I

Our poet's preoccupation with the mythological stories inspired him with their esoteric and mystic message which he has already tried to explain in his various *hymns*. He has raised rhetorical interrogations suggesting that these stories have a deeper meaning. In the *Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai hymn*, our poet points that the greatest message of these stories is the message of redemption for all; for, such is the love of God—a message which he himself confesses has inspired him to take refuge in the Lord—a message which will inspire the fallen and the down-trodden with the new hope of their certain salvation. Unfortunately, all the verses of this *hymn* are not available; only five have reached us.

II

The story of *Mārkkaṇḍēya's* conquest of death (1), of the spider becoming an Emperor (2), of *Viṣṇu's* worship with his own eyes (3), of the gift of *Pāsupata* to *Arjuṉa* (4) and of the blessings showered on the rulers of the three burnt cities (5) are here specifically mentioned as inspiring our poet. The significance and implication of these stories lie in their inspiration leading to the self-surrender unto God, which he explains in the latter half of the verses. "I always praise you as the king and my Lord, standing with folded hands, and taking refuge in your feet with all my love" (1). "I fall at your feet coming rolling on the ground (in ecstasy) and exclaiming your praises with all my love. I *took refuge in* you afraid of the *karma* rushing on me" (2). "I praise, Oh, God of Gods! your shining feet babbling your glories! I took refuge in you afraid of the consuming *karma*" (3). "Out of love and attachment I praise your names worshipping you and contemplating on your greatness and there melting away in love. I took refuge in your feet with all my heart" (4). *Thus he expresses the change* brought over him by this inspiration from the mythological stories, those good old stories which came to him thus with a new revelation.

CHAPTER XIX

TIRUVIṬAIMARUTŪR

(*Hymn* 60)

I

Our poet has been very much impressed with the springing forth, all of a sudden, of the message of the old folk tayes of the *Purāṇas* which he must have been listening to with rapt attention from his childhood without ever consciously suspecting that they had any such message. The inner meanings seem to agree so much with his own spiritual and mystic experience vouchsafed to him by the Grace of God, that he feels a remorse for having missed this message of these popular stories. He has been singing of his achieving the deathless stage; but this revelation of a new message almost springs up from the unconscious and inspires him to take refuge in the Lord. The love of the Lord for the people to be saved is, indeed, delineated so graphically by those stories going very much beyond the expectations of his experience that this *purāṇic* personality of God appears to him nearer than before, almost appearing to be wonderfully new. He has been seeing reflections of this Lord in the beautiful visions of Nature in the various holy places he visited almost making them Heaven on Earth. The Seer is said to sleep in this world keeping himself awake in the sphere of Truth; but as in our case, dreams disturb the Seer's sleep also where as long as the dream lasts, everything therein appears as true and real, frightening, irritating or cheering as the case may be. Therefore, when the old habits of thought return, the Heaven on Earth gives place to the well known miseries of the world. This remorse, his new vision of the Lord, and his miserable dream — all lead him to condemn himself to exaggerate his imaginary faults by the side of the loving Lord who is all Goodness and to despair of an escape from the clutches of the world of death and misery and its allies of five senses and women, but he is sure that God alone can save him and that He will save him. It is in some such state of mind our poet sings this *Tiruviṭaimarutūr hymn.*

The *hymns* of *Nampi Ārūrar* seem to be so many waves of spiritual experience with their troughs and crests alternating. The same ebb and flow of joy of the mystic union is found in *Nammāḻvār's* poems. The commentators there explain that the Lord is playing a game of hide and seek, inspiring, at one time the *Āḻvār* with joy, so that he may not become ultimately crestfallen and then alternately disappearing from his presence so as to make him feel miserable and express that feeling and depression, in verses which He loved to listen and which He knew would save the suffering world. It is for consideration whether what we have described in the previous paragraph from the point of view of *Nampi Ārūrar* may not be spoken of as a game of hide and seek from the point of view of the Lord. This mission of the saints' lives for saving the world suggests one other idea. These loving souls, feeling ever for the world, identify themselves so very much with it that all its sins and deceits they speak of as their own; and this explains their periodic feeling of depression and despondency whilst as a matter of fact they have reached the highest level of spiritual experience and divine bliss.

II

This *Tiruviṭaimarutūr hymn* is but a continuation or a consequence of the *Tiruvāvaṭuturai hymn.* There he took refuge afresh in the feet of the Lord. Here, he begs of the Lord — the Father and the munificent Lord of *Iṭaimarutu* — to show a way of escape and redemption — *"Uyvakai aruḷāy Iṭaimaruturai entai Pirāṉē"* — that is the refrain of the song. The God of *Iṭaimarutu* is all Love. He is our Father (*Entai*—1-10), Mother (*Entāy*—1) and the Lord (*Emmāṉ* — 4). The Lord of the *Dēvas* (4) is the Great *Śiva,* the Good (8); The sacred name considered by the *Śaivites* to be the proper name of the Absolute — *"Sivaṉeṉum nāmam tanakkē yuṭaiya cemmēṉi emmāṉ".*[1] He is of the beautiful eyes (1); He is of the loving *Antaṇar* — This is another reading (1); He is the destroyer of all obstacles and the bestower of peace (*Araṉ*) (1); the Dancer on the Fire (8); He is of the colour of the flame (*tī vaṇṇā*) (8); One who adorns Himself with the crown of the crescent moon to save it (4).

1. *Appar* 4: 113: 9.

III

If God is all love, our poet feels he himself is all bad by His side. He is conscious that he, as a saved soul, was walking all along in the path of the Lord. But his remorse, great by the side of the new vision of the love of the Lord and the misery of the world, makes him cry for further salvation. He feels as though all his spiritual practices and experiences were like the habitual act of the ass carrying the fragrant *kuṅkumam* without ever being conscious of this precious burden (1). No wonder the ass is so neglected—slighted—when it can no longer serve as of old as though it had done nothing worth remembering. "I have", cries our poet, "laboured in vain; and with a confused mind caught into the dangerous whirlpool; O mind! you sit and weep. What can you do? I am a fool not even capable of crying: 'O, Lord of Loving eyes! Destroyer of obstacles!' This life is of no account like unto the ass" (1).

He thus condemns himself, therefore, for not reaching the Lord. "I state and confess. I have not known anything of that life experiencing the way to reach your rosy feet; but I speak; but this, all noise and meaning" (2). "I have not already reached your rosy feet as I must have. The time flies whilst I become an obstinate fool" (3). "I do not contemplate on you to place or enthrone you in my mind" (4). "The sense organs have kicked me aside, as something worthless." (5). "At length, I have become an eternal burden unto you" (5). "In the path of the foolish people I had not known True Wisdom and Reality — alas! me a poor soul!" (8),

IV

He prays for a way of escape from the world of death (9) and deceit (8). He condemns himself as falling a prey to the world and cries for help to escape from its clutches (7). This *hymn* gives such a beautiful expression to this worldly suffering of gray hairs, old age and trembling misery (2) and to the saving love of the Lord, that the poet himself assures out of his own personal conviction rising after the completion of the first nine verses, herein, that those who can with all their heart and joy praise the Lord with this garland of shining beacon light of a *hymn,* will reach the rosy feet of the Lord, without being attacked by any gray hair, old age or trembling shocks (10).

Fear of death is a wholesome fear and, as is told in the life of the *Buddha* who seeing an old man, a man of disease and a corpse renounced the world, brings about a real conversion of the heart. The first solution of the problem of the mysterious sufferings of the world is the law of *karma;* but *karma* is a never ending chain—every act creating its future effect—an ever grinding wheel which none can ever escape. This knot has to be cut by the Grace of God. The sin grows through the five senses which become our Lords with their net of women (8 & 9).

"Gray hairs, old age and disease will come. Alas! I am spent up having resolved on acts of no good (or ungrateful acts). I now realize that I have been the well ground turmeric—(to be used and to be thrown out). I am afraid of the Lord of Death"—this is one confession of our poet (2).

The ephemeral nature of life is another way of expressing the same fear of old age and death.

Like the tiny dew drop on the crown of the grass blade disappearing at the sight of the hot sun, life is of no substance. "What now for me—today, tomorrow—thus every day I have been setting down only to feel miserable. As an obstinate idiot, I have allowed time to be wasted—*"Mūrkkaṉākik kaḻintaṉa kālam"*—this phrase is again repeated (3, 4). What I did in the previous birth inflicts me in this birth and I have wasted time—an obstinate idiot. Have I done anything to overcome this evil *karma* by doing any good act?" He confesses that he has resolved on only acts that are not good. Again he repents for the past: "I do not give even an iota to those who beg" (4). "I cannot give away the glorious wealth. What is the result? I cannot leave off the sins, anger, vengeance and craving. The five organs are not under my control. I feel miserable, afraid of being thrust into the Hell by the Lord of Death when the trembling old age comes" (7).

"The women not as life companions but as play things of pleasure—those of the beautiful but subtle waist, create the illusion of life" (6). "These young ones spread their net of deceit contemplating on this pleasure of this poor human life. I have stayed there caught within the net" (9). "Really this is the net of deceitful but inescapably hard *karma.* The plantain plant will yield its fruits only once but like a fool I expected it to bear fruits once again for me. Thus in the hope of further happiness I was

getting myself enmeshed in the fetters harder and harder. That is the way of the foolish people" (9). They are the well ground turmeric already referred to (10).

It is true this life of pleasure is not all evil; there are good aspects as well. "I have increased my good aspects as well as evil" (6). This assertion of his good deeds is very significant. "Engrossed therein, I have not studied many arts or achieved true knowledge" (6). "Alas! I am a sinner and I have committed many sins". The remorse reaches its zenith and he cries, "Why am I alive?" (6).

"The life of pleasure is a life of slavery to the senses. The five sense organs established to protect us by receiving reports of danger from outside, without in any way suffering any decrease in their power of hegemony over us—destroy our life". "They kick us away (to die)" (5). "The five senses are not within my control" (7). "These are the five kings or rulers. Having caught hold of this sovereignty they will not ever leave us. That is the way they desire (me to be their slave). I am in despair—I do not know what to do after having obediently carried out their commands according to their whims and fancies. What is the way (out) for me?" (8).

V

Is there no escape from the eternal action of *karma*? There is the Grace of the Lord as our poet has suggested so often. Repentance and true change of heart will save us, thanks to the Lord of Love. To win the heart of this Lord of Love, we must become like Him, merciful and kind unto the poor and the needy. If one does not thus give out of love, one never escapes from *karma*. That is why our saint cries for all—"I do not give even an iota to those who beg" (4). "I cannot part with the wealth that appears all shining to me" (7). This mercy blesseth one who takes and one who gives. When this mercy springs in our mind, vengeance and anger and hankering after pleasures no more haunt us and, therefore, no more mistakes arise; no more are we slaves to the senses, and old age disappears; death holds no threat of hell (7). All this springs from our reliance on God or the contemplation on Him, or on enshrining Him in our heart or mind. Hence this cry: 'Alas! I cannot enshrine you in my mind and contemplate on you' (4). God is the greatest prop and support. "I

have no other prop to lean on (except yourself)" (6). This is the significant cry proving his great reliance on the Lord even in the midst of this doleful *hymn.* It is a cry of self-surrender inspired by the vision of God and not a cry of despair of an ordinary man! "After the sense organs have kicked me aside, I have become an eternal burden unto you. I woke up and opened my eyes. I saw the True Reality (the Lord). If this is the human life—the miserable life of the senses—I do not want it and I despise it. Help me with a way out" (5). That is the cry of a developed soul.

CHAPTER XX

TIRUNĀKĒCCARAM

(*Hymn* 99)

I

Why all this suffering of this world? Why this fall? "It is *Karma*"—that is the *prima facie* answer. Our sense of justice, our feeling of uniformity of nature and our conception of law bringing out the inter-relation of cause and effect demand this theory of *Karma* and we are satisfied with it. But this becomes mechanical in a way. The human thought demands a spiritual explanation. All these are but romantic dreams—that is one way of looking at things as already stated. Why, however, this illusion and delusion? It is a process of spiritual education, the world appearing in different ways according to various mental levels reached.

In the world of ours where law is administered, the conception of punishment has been growing and developing through various stages; vengeance and vindictiveness first took the form of punishment. But hatred thus nurtured, demands more than it receives. Then develops the idea of retribution demanding an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and no more. Talk of compensation also arises. The human heart of love can never be satisfied with such infliction even when just. The idea of punishment for preventing others, therefore, develops. Inflictions like capital punishment can never be said to prevent the criminal from repeating the offence; for, he does not remain thereafter. It prevents others from committing the same crime. But the criminal cannot be a mere scape-goat and the idea of punishment as a way of reformation develops. This shows a priggish sense of condescension and it is felt that society is responsible to a certain extent for the crime. Crime comes to be looked upon as an infection and a disease—a mental disease requiring as such medical treatment rather than vindictive punishment. The doctor inflicts pain, but out of necessity and love. The theory of *karma* also develops in all these ways and we reach the conception of God as the

doctor and the medicine. The *Tiruvāñciyam hymn,* we saw, spoke of he Lord as the medicine for chronic *Karma.* This *hymn* on *Tirunākēccaram* tries to give a concrete explanation on these lines.

The previous *hymn* spoke of the net of *Karma* giving rise to gray hair, old age and trembling. The *Karma* will lose its hold, our poet assures us, on the masters of the present *hymn* which is devoid of all shortcomings. How is it achieved by this *hymn?*

II

The same pattern of a sentence occurs in all the verses but the last. "The Lord of *Tirunākēccaram,* of such poetic and mystic beauty leading us to expect all love and munificence, bliss and sympathy had done this act upsetting all such expectations. Why is it that He has done so?" This is the pattern. "Like unto one committing suicide, why does He swallow poison to the great height of His consort making her chaste heart almost collapse?" (1). "Leaving the company of the Mother and Her domestic life, has He become a natural ascetic to bless the *Tapasivans?*" (2). "Why has He been moved by the idea of destroying the Lord of Death?" (3). "Why has He flayed the elephant?" (4). "Why does He love the elaboration of the *Vēdas* (to the dismay of the simple-minded?)" (5). "Why does He wear the skin of the lion, the tiger and of the elephant springing out of the sacrifice?" (6). "Why does He burn to ashes *Kāma* and the three cities?" (7, 8 & 9). "Why does He appear, naked and wandering, like the heretic?" (10).

III

One does not ordinarily expect such acts as these from a person whose aesthetic taste has led Him to choose a beautiful spot like *Tirunākēccaram* by our poet. The bees of beautiful gossamer of wings, as the very life and connecting link of the flowers are found in communion with the row of short plants of jessamine and '*kullai*' and they ultimately reach the higher and more cool '*mātavi*' creeper (1). Enthroning themselves on the lotuses and feasting on the honey, the bees hum about and the carps frisk about and dance (7, 9). The roving bees mix freely with jasmine and *caṇpaka* and sing in joy (8). The bees on the pollen dust hum whilst the cuckoo and the peacock frequent the groves of flowers surrounded by the cocoanut palms (11). There is nothing

of the frightful appearance there except the '*kuruntu*' whose buds assume the form of a serpent's tooth (2); but everything seems to be munificent there, where '*cerunti*' blossoms like gold (2). The fields are full of the beautiful flowers of '*kuvaḷai*' and *kaḻunīr* whilst in the surrounding moat the fish, big and small, dash in an ecstasy of joy (3). In the front-yard of houses stand the young arecanut palms with their flowers full of honey, besmearing which the zephyr enters and walks about as though in procession (4). The waves of the new flood dash against the cool fields pushing in the great gems together with sandal and '*akil*' wood of the mountains (5). That is the beautiful place of cool fields full of ripples of the crystal clear water—the beautiful place of the Lord—the Heavens of an arcadia full of sweet smelling flowers of beautiful forms with bees humming about and singing tunes, intoxicated by the honey, whilst the *cuckoo* and the peacock frequent there to sing and dance where the fish dash and frisk about in joy amidst beautiful groves and fields forming the promenade of the zephyr and wherein flow the new waters in floods carrying there all the wealth of the mountains.

This inspires the followers of the Lord in their vociferous Hallelujah of their joyful worship to bow down before Him, ordaining themselves for various acts of divine service and praising His glory (10). This mention of the *Bhaktas* and their joy in the almost concluding verse of the *hymn,* instead of the description of the joyful bees and birds of the previous verses, seems to imply that the latter description of the joyful bees and birds of the previous verses is but an allegorical representation of the *Bhaktas* doing their duty in joy, a new way of looking at His description of Nature thus suggested by our poet—is this not the way, the commonfolk look at these birds as revealing the future through their advent and their noise appears to these simple minded as a divine language?

IV

The question propounded in every verse is really a rhetorical interrogation, implying that there is a meaning in the seemingly contradictory acts of God. Here comes in the message of the stories. The law of *Karma* is found working in the case of those who suffer at the hands of the Lord. But as *Māṇikkavācakar* states, "It is the great glory of the vanquished that they suffer defeat at His hands—"*Ayaṉai Aṉaṅkaṉai Antakaṉaic Cantiraṉai*

vayaṉaṅkaḷ māṟā vaṭu-c-ceytāṉ eṉṉēṭi? Nayaṉaṅkaḷ mūṉṟuṭaiya Nāyakaṉē taṇṭittāl jayamaṉṟō vāṉavarkku-t-tāḻ kuḻalāy cāḻalō" (*Cāḻal*: 4). God's acts are the acts of the doctor aiming at making the sufferers whole and healthy; they are thus saved and blessed with God's love. Therefore, they are His acts of moral grandeur and beauty. They are as beautiful as the flowers, bees, fish, peacocks, *cuckoos* and all these suggest the joy of the *Aṭiyōrs* of *Tirunākēccaram*, discharging their duty as worshippers of the Lord. No wonder that this kind of experience expressed in this *hymn* makes the poet feel the loosening and breaking away of the fetters of *Karma*. There is a freedom from the mechanical pressure of *Karma*, which stands revealed as the Love of God, and that is why the poet assures us that those who read this *hymn* will also undergo the same experience and attain the same freedom and joy.

CHAPTER XXI

TIRUKKALAYA NALLŪR

(*Hymn* 16)

I

The same idea of the holy place appearing as the Heaven of innocence, beauty, joy and duty continues to retain the central place in the mind of our poet. There is now no more feeling of seeming contradiction between the acts of divine punishment and the appearance of Beauty. Contradiction is resolved in the underlying divine love.

II

This *hymn* on *Tirukkalaya Nallūr* (*Ūr* is a city, from *'Ūra'* or *'Ulā'* to move about. *Nallūr* is one variety of cities called as such because of its greatness—*'Naṉṟu peritu ākum'*[1]—or goodness or holiness: See *Veṇṇei Nallūr, Karivalam vanta Nallūr, Tirunallūrp perumaṉam, Tiru Nallūr. Kalaya Nallūr* is the city of *kalai* or arts. The description *'kalai aṭainta'* in the 4th verse seems to support this view. *Kalayaṉār,* (the saint may be *Kalaiñaṉār,* the learned in arts), emphasizes the loving beauty of the Lord and His place. If He is the life, Nature is His body. Life takes the body that befits it. This *hymn* is a masterpiece of poetry and music full of rhythmic assonance and sweet flow. Its verses are what we call *'Eṉ cīr kaḻi neṭil aṭi āciriya viruttam'* or *'Iraṭṭai viruttam'* each line of eight feet splitting into two halves of four feet—three *'kāys'* and one *'mā'*. The first halves of the verses describe the story of the Lord and the second halves describe the beauty and greatness of *Kalayanallūr.* The pattern of the sentence in every verse is the same. "If you ask what is the city of this Lord of these activities, look ye, it is this *Kalayanallūr!*" The second lines always end in *'Ūṟ viṉavil'* and the fourth lines always end in *'Kalayanallūr kāṇē!'*

1. *Tol. Col., S.* 343.

III

The joy and the holiness given expression to in these *hymns* are, indeed, so infectious that the author himself feels that those who can sing this musical ten, with love, will be rid of all their misery and sin and, therefore, recommends its daily recitation (11). There are a few significant descriptions of the Lord in the light of which this *hymn* has to be read. The Lord is the Lord of the *Dēvas*—*'Viṇṇavarkōṉ'* (1); the king or the All Pervasive—*'Iṟaiyavaṉ'* (2); He of the Natural Beauty—*'Viṭaṅkaṉ'* (3); of the art form of Beauty—*'Vikirtaṉ'* (5); the Best, *'Uttamaṉ'* (4); the Loving *Śiva*—*'Aruḷ peṟuku Civaperumāṉ'* (6); the blotless—*'Nirmalaṉ'* (7); the Supreme—*'Paraṉ'* (10); the Beyond—*'Paramaṉ'* (11).

IV

The *hymn* begins with the story of the Lord marrying the damsel of *Tapas*—He is the Lord of the eye in the forehead which burnt *Kāma* (1). The Lord is again described as the father of the Destroyer of *Tārakāsura*—the father who burnt *Kāma* (9). These, apart from representing the Love aspect of God as the Mother, also suggest the correct attitude towards married life. Married life is divine, provided it is a life of *tyāga* where one is the master and not a slave of passions. There is a play of the consort coming from behind and closing the eyes of the Lord and its results are described. The Lord is all pervasive and the whole world becomes blind and enshrowded in darkness which necessitates the Lord creating for Himself an eye in His forehead (4). He is All Pervasive (2). He is everything—the five elements of the Universe, the firmly rooted things of the world and the moving lives (7). But He is beyond them and, therefore, not contaminated by their blots or defects. He is the Great, beyond the reach of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8)—the loving Lord of the crescent moon (8), the All Merciful swallowing poison (8), the Lord of the Bull and of the Mother Goddess (8) and the Begging bard (11). There are the stories of the burning of the three cities (5), of the destruction of *Dakṣa's* sacrifice (6), of the crushing down of *Rāvaṇa* (7) and of the victory over *Andaka* (2), *Indra* (2) and *Jalandhara* (2). These are victories of His love—*"Tēyvittu aruḷ peṟuku Civaperumāṉ* (6)—the Lord Śiva of ever increasing Grace which takes the form of His crushing moon".

Viṣṇu was blessed with the discus which killed *Jalandhara* revealing the mystery of the act of the *Lord's Grace* which at once becomes a salvation for *Jalandhara* and a gift for *Viṣṇu* (2). This story of *Viṣṇu* is a story of his worship with his very eye as the flower (2). There is again the story of the worship by *Brahma* in a befitting manner (10). Above all, there is the worship by *Caṇḍēśvara* renouncing all mundane relations (3). The Lord goes ever in quest of him to receive his services. This reminds us of the christian conception of the Good Shepherd. The *Vaiṣṇavites* speak of the soul as the life jewel of God. If the soul goes astray the loss is His and, therefore, He goes in search of it; He is never happy till He regains it and the soul is saved.

V

The description of the place as a fitting receptacle of Divine Love follows. The bees slowly approach the buds. The insects of six legs sing. The row of peacocks dance in the beautiful groves. Nearby, the blue lilies sleep beside the sugarcane, as though the song were a lullaby. The lotus blooms and beams up with joyful face as though enjoying the concert and the dance. In passing, it may be noted that there is an implied suggestion that the Love of God affects various people according to their spiritual development and nature, even as the same tune of the bee acts as a lullaby to some and a waking up song to others (1).

If the Lord of *Nampi Ārūrar* is All Pervasive, our poet has a broad heart of love to which everything makes a poetic appeal. The great intellectual giants engrossed in the spiritual significance of the *Vēdas* recite them aloud out of pure joy. There comes the rhythmic sound of the musical drums perhaps in accompaniment to music and dance in the feasts and festivities, public and private. Groups of children jump and play creating their characteristic sound. These sounds from innumerable groups swell up. The buffaloes in confusion dash into the water; the frightened carps rush to the lotuses for safety wherefrom the scared bees which have drunk deep the honey of the lotuses flee away. Here is another attempt of a higher joy scaring the foolish away (2).

There are the works of art and architecture—*Maṇṭapas* (Halls) *Gopurams* (Towers), *Māḷikais* (Palaces) with *cūḷikais* (Terraces) —everywhere in this holy place where the sacred sounds of the *Vēdas* and the sounds of festivals overflow and fill up all streets.

The hearts of the sight-seers are full. More than these architectures, this sacred music commotion of the festivals, their minds and eyes are captivated by the natural pond of lotuses where joyfully dive and bathe the beautiful damsels—a harmony of the beauty of art and nature, of spiritual and secular music (3).

VI

This place is on the southern bank of the river *Aricil* which our poet has already described. The waters heave up in waves of the flood, tumbling the tusks of elephants and pushing forth *'akil'* and sandal wood (4). The flood, like the crown of the Lord harmonizing various conflicting things brings out a harmony of the white *chaurie,* the blue tail of the peacocks of the animal life—and of the *Vēṅkai* and *kōṅku* flowers of the plant life, the streets in the zephyr full of fragrance of the honey of the flowers of the arecanut palm (10). The flood brings about harmony of all things of enjoyment: fruits, gems, gold, flowers and fragrant woods—but all these are under the terrifying and loathful exterior of muddy water which whilst appearing to be dirty, washes clean all things it casts forth. Does not this remind of the world where people escape from the Lord's Grace even as the carps rush away from the honeyed flowers of the floods to the shallow fields? (7)

There comes the river *Aricil* on whose southern bank stands this *Kalayanallūr* appearing beautifully as a group of clouds because of the smoke of sacrifice performed, for driving out the evils of the *Kali* age, by the *Antaṇar* or Brahmins in whom the Arts and knowledge have taken refuge (4). There these Brahmins reside and live everywhere happily studying the arts, listening to and learning the various aspects of the Lord, praising Him and reciting many *hymns* and *Vēdic* songs full of meaning words (5). (The significance of this description has been explained elsewhere). These are the people of melting heart—loving and sympathetic heart, falling at the feet of the Lord in the morning and in the evening, so much that Nature seems to resonate with their worship (8). The *cuckoos* of the grove call out and the beautiful peacocks dance; the bees hum the musical tune whilst the green parrots recite and repeat the praises as the central worshippers in accompaniment to music and dance (8).

The dark waters whip up white waves battering on the two banks and throwing up and down the fragrant cardamom and cloves. On the banks of the river stands *Kalaya Nallūr* surrounded

by the shining and fragrant groves where occurs a series of metamorphoses—worthy of Ovid's song—the dark trees of *Puṉṉai* with buds like white pearls and these are metamorphosed into flowers of gold and again changed so as to exhibit the beauty of the coral (9).

The waves of the floods reaching the river *Aricil* dash against the spreading creepers of *Mullai, Mallikai* and *Ceṉpakam* and on the southern bank of the river stands the city of fields which present the sight of the most natural schools where the milch cow with its motherly instinct feeds on the fragrant *Kaḻunīr* flower whilst her group of calves learn to graze the sprouts of sugarcane—a lovely rendezvous of love and learning with a message to the modern leaders of education (6). Thus the descriptions become more and more centring round the worship of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXII

CŌṞṞUTTUṞAI

(*Hymn* 94)

I

This *hymn* is on the pattern of the *Cittīccaram hymn* (93) both on the pattern of the sentence and the pattern of the verses. The place of the Lord is *Cōṟṟuttuṟai—"Iṭam* .... *Cōṟṟuttuṟaiyē"*—that is the pattern of the sentence. The second lines end with *'iṭamām'* (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 & 9), *'patiyām'* (6) and *'kōyil'* (7) and the fourth lines end with *'Cōṟṟuttuṟaiyē'*. The slow flowing of the music of the previous *hymn* moves very fast in the present. The rhythm here is the jumping *'Kali'* rhythm reminding us of the galloping horse. The poet's joy reaches its height in this fast moving *hymn* like a dance of ecstasy. The stories of the *Purāṇas* are not narrated elaborately. The first verse however is still reminiscent of the previous *hymn*. In the other verses, the references to the *Purāṇic* stories are only casual. The important and impressive dramatic situations therein alone, are made lifelike. The *Purāṇic* descriptions of His form are given as beautiful visions. It is not that we get only still pictures instead of moving pictures. It is rather, that we get paintings of His lovely forms and of His victorious acts full of dynamic force. The beauty and the love of God underlying the stories have been left in the previous *hymns* to be understood by us. Here, they are more patent. The beauty and the holiness of the place are more explicitly identified with the holiness of God. The fact of His blessing us becomes as important as the *Purāṇic* stories.

II

A few descriptions of the *Purāṇic* form are lifelike and poetic. "He is the Lord of the tiger's skin still wet with the flowing blood and of the mat-lock appearing like the flow of fire and water; *"Aḻal nīr oḻuki yaṉaiya caṭai"*—This is really beautiful and dynamic suggesting the flow of the *Ganges* inside the flowing mat-lock looking like fire" (1). "The sacred thread on the Lord's chest is like a crystal flow on a coral reef" (4). "The beautiful serpent, the feather of the crane and the crescent moon of the dusk are

arranged and harmonized in the crown of the Lord" (3). "He dances in the graveyard with dead bones and flowers of '*erukku*' " (7). "A kick to Death and a capital punishment to the proud *Brahma* (or *Dakṣa*), the creator, He administers"—this is a dramatic and forcible way of describing the incidents (5). "The foolish and simple Lord who swallows the poison"—is another description (6). "A gaze of His eyes reduced *Kāma* to ashes for He is a sea of the sacrificial fire" (8)—this is another description suggesting that all His acts are sacrifice or *tyāga*. "He is the first cause of this Universe standing firm and capable of breaking up the old fetters of *Karma*" (2). "Those who worship Him out of love even with insignificant things like leaves, He helps to escape this ephemeral life" (9). These last two descriptions emphasizing the universal aspect of God's love and His significance to us in the present, are enumeratered along with the other descriptions, with a view to show that they are as important as the other activities of God, activities which in the last resort signify the Grace of God, removing the fetters of this ephemeral life (9).

III

In this connection, the other descriptions of the Lord become significant. God is '*Uṭaiyāṉ*', or the Lord of the possessions (1); '*Amalan*', the blotless or the One who removes blots (2); '*Vaittāṉ*', One who ordains things (3); '*Kōmāṉ*', the king (4); '*Maintaṉ*', the strong or the youth (5); '*Perumāṉ*', the Supreme (6); '*Puṉitaṉ*', the Pure (7) and '*Mutalvaṉ*', the First (10).

IV

In the last two lines of each verse, our poet usually describes the beauty of the place; he mentions in verse 2, the worship and the praise of the '*toṇṭar*' of incessant love worshipping with garlands of flowers. He again describes the followers of *Śiva* who renounce wealth and all other important attachments as forming the beauty of this place (7). Here is the imperishable wealth of *Cōṟṟutturai*, the imperishable wealth to the *tapasvins*, who, bow down their head before Him (9). These are '*Aṟṟār aṭiyār*' (10), those who have taken refuge in Him, cutting away all other attachments of theirs.

The other descriptions of *Cōṟṟutturai*, on the banks of the *Kāviri*, the river of gold (1, 5), descriptions of its wealth (9), of

its beauty of groves and birds (3) and of the beautiful and chaste women (8) have to be interpreted as carrying the same message of the joy of self-surrender unto the Lord. The pearl from the bamboo and heaps of gold whirl in the eddies of floods of the *Kāviri* (1). In its grove, the trees *'ātti'* and *'matuvam'* (*iruppai*) give a shower of honey drops (4) wherein are accumulated pollen dusts with all sorts of bees flocking there—a city surrounded on all sides by water (5). The mango tree feeds itself with the cool waters of the *Kāviri* but what a wonder, it emits fire (*i.e.*, puts forth sprouts like red fire) in the groves of mangoes surrounding this place (6). The sweet and tender damsels of beautiful tresses of hair sweeten their chambers with smokes of fragrant wood, which reach the Heavens (8).

At the conclusion of this *hymn* which has sung the glories of the followers of *Śiva*, our poet calls himself—he is inspired by the experience of his own *hymn*—the dog and slave of the followers of *Śiva;* and the joy of this *hymn* is expressed by his advice to the world that those who learn the words of the *hymn* will be rid of all miseries (10).

PART III

IN THE CŌḺA COUNTRY—LATER?

Introduction

I

The *hymns* in this part are included by *Cēkkiḻār* in the group already described. But in view of their tone of renunciation, we have separated them so as to be included with the *hymns* of the last period where also the same tone is heard. The geographical argument, as we had already pointed out is the bedrock on which *Cēkkiḻār* builds his scheme of *Ārūrar's hymns.* In the last period also, our poet, according to *Cēkkiḻār,* visits *Tiruvaiyāṟu* and the neighbouring places for some of which *hymns* are found only in the present group. Therefore, the geographical argument does not stand in the way of re-arrangement.

II

Our poet exclaims, "Whom shall I think of except yourself?", "Those who take refuge in the feet of the Lord are our Lords and Saviours"; "If He does not care for us, is there no other Lord but He"?. "Our poet speaks of the Lord as the beauty of the forest even as the damsels have spoken to *Bhikṣāṭana*". Again he cries, "Forgetting you is death unto me. Even if I forget, my tongue will utter the truth *Namaccivāya*", "Will you also be desirous of me! O, Lord of *Veñcamākkūṭal,* pray, assure me saying, "Fear not' ", "O, foolish mind! Get up. We shall go to worship at *Puṟampayam*", "I had not known this, this astonishing supreme excellence of the Lord of *Kūṭalaiyāṟṟūr* going this way", "O, Lord of *Mutukuṉṟam!* Why this begging? What will happen if in the meantime your followers die?", "He is our Prince all through our sevenfold births. We have this great blessing, that the Lord of *Ciṟṟampalam* is there to save us from *Yama* and his followers".

III

There is thus an ebb and flow of divine bliss alternating in these *hymns.* The *Bhikṣāṭana* form becomes as it were the motif of our poet's art. God is all forms of relationship—this truth is again emphasized. God is purity and beauty, the great path. Lord's concern for all is often emphasized. Contemplation, self-

surrender, complete dedication of the three *karaṇas* are all beautifully brought out as the Supreme form of worship. Service to the followers of the Lord is a sign of perfection and contemplation of the *Bhaktas* is spoken of as the very contemplation on the Lord.

IV

The *Pañcākṣara* comes in only in this group of *hymns*. "My parents are no more my prop;[1] I come besmeared with ashes, wearing a loin cloth"[1a]—thus our poet expresses his feeling of renunciation. In the previous group of *hymns*, the beautiful phrase "*Kaṟpaka-k kaṭal*"[2] occurs. In this group he calls the Lord "*Kaṟpakā*",[3] the munificent one that gives all we desire like the fabulous tree of the Heavens. There is another beautiful phrase describing the Lord '*Ārā in̲ Amudu*',[4] the insatiable nectar, a phrase which the *Vaiṣṇavites* are so fond of. The Lord is the medicine to the *Karmas* of the world. The *purāṇic* stories are suggested to have an esoteric meaning revealing the Grace of the Lord.

V

Description of nature, its beauty and holiness occurs in this group of *hymns as well*. Here, we have the *Kāviri* and the *Ciṟṟāṟu* —the *Kāviri* suggesting the worship of the Lord, especially the worship of the Lord by adorning Him with "*Vaṭṭa vācikai*" or round laurel and the *Ciṟṟāṟu* suggesting the overflow of the love of the Lord. The holy places are described in such a way as to create in our mind the impression of Heaven on earth or *Śivalōka*. The divinity of women is also hinted.

VI

The last verses as usual give us the idea as the result flowing from the recitation of the *hymns*: the residence in *Paralōka* or *Śivalōka*, rulership of *Viṇṇulaku* (Heavens or *Vāṉulaku*) the release from sevenfold births and *karmas*, becoming the Saviour of the followers, the communion with His feet, the freedom from misery or obstruction, the freedom from faults or confusion of mind. It looks as though these are all the descriptions of the Supreme Spiritual state.

1. 7: 24: 3. ..
1a. 7: 24: 2.
2. 7: 67: 8.
3. 7: 42: 5.
4. 7: 27: 7.

MALAPĀṬI

(*Hymn* 24)

I

In this *hymn* the poet makes a personal appeal to the Lord. He is also making a slef-surrender. Here, therefore, comes another trough of the wave of his spiritual experience, which we had already explained. The *Purāṇic* stories are casual, not occupying any central place in this *hymn*. "The golden form, the tiger's skin, the lightning-like mat-lock, the '*koṉṟai*' flower (1) the Mother Goddess (2), the crescent moon (7), the beautiful ear-ring (7), the deer in the hand (9) and the destruction of the three cities (10) are referred to. As already pointed out, this is a *hymn* of worship and self-surrender and, therefore, it refers to the worship of *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* (9) and to the beautiful flowers with which the sun and the other *Dēvas* worship the Lord (8). The beautiful red (*cemmai-ceyya*) flowers showered on Him by the devotees keep Him firm in the righteous (*cemmai*) path (8)—here is a pun on the words '*cemmai* and *ceyya*' which mean red, beautiful and upright. The beauty of the Lord appeals to our poet and he often refers to the Lord as precious ruby (*māṇikkam*) in his *hymns*. Here, in this *hymn*, he addressed the Lord in every verse as the ruby of *Malapāṭi* — *Malapāṭiyul māṇikkamē*' — the great and famous precious ruby (1-9) and '*Māmaṇi*' in (1).

The Lord is all forms of relationship, implying that others whom we call relations, are not really such (3) or, are so only because of the Lord within them. This is another idea which our poet often repeats and he takes refuge in Him as the great one who is all kinds of relationship — the mother (*Aṉṉē*' — 1), the lover (*Kēḷ* — 2), the father (*Entāy* — 7), the brother (Aṇṇā — 5), the hero (Āḷ — 6), the chief (*Aiyā* — 8) the Lord (*Ammāṉ* — 3), He who is the Universe (*Aṇṭā* — 4), the Intellect (*Aṟivé* — 9) — the words denoting these relationships occur in a prominent place in every verse as the beginning of the fourth lines emphasized further by '*etukai*' or assonance.

The other aspects of God are also emphasized. He is spoken of as the Path (*Neṟi* — 9), the symbol or the target of *Liṅga* (*Kuṟi* — 9), He who is without any blot (*Ninmalaṉ* — 9), he who stands firm in His upright path (*Miku cemmaiyuḷ niṉṟavaṉ* — 8), He who is good, affable and beautiful (*Nīrmaiyaṉ* — 9), the Wise, the Perfect (*Vittakaṉ* — 7), the Idea and the Significance of the seven worlds (5), the sweet musical *Tamiḻ* (5), the Great beyond everything (5) (the significance of these terms we tried to explain elsewhere).

II

The beauty of the holy place is also casually mentioned. Taking refuge from the world of misery into the cool shade of the Lord's feet, our poet naturally emphasizes the cool shade of the holy place, (*Maiyār pūm poḻil*—8), full of flower groves overcast by clouds; (*Maimmām pūmpoḻil*—3) the beautiful mango grove dark with shade, the grove of flowers, full of bees (*Vaṇṭār pūmpoḻil*—4), the grove expressing the fertility of the soil and full of the artistic beauty (5), the lovely grove (*Maintār cōlai*—7).

III

In this beautiful place, into the feet of the Lord of those beautiful forms and excellent qualities described above, the poet takes refuge. "My father and my Mother cannot be any prop unto me even to the extent of the seed of the sesame" (3). "In this illusion of birth, I was born and I died many a time. I have thus become thoroughly eaten away by exhaustion" (3). "From old times, I am your servant" (4). "I dedicated myself completely to the service of all the servants of your followers" (4). "I cut myself away from the faults without their ever following me" (4). "Before the Lord of the appointed day or *Yama* comes and afflicts me, I have taken refuge in You alone, completely as your servant—pray, accept me as well, O Lord!" (6). "Renouncing everything, I have worn only a waist string and a loin cloth besmearing my body with the sacred ash and I have come and taken refuge in your feet; pray, accept me" (2)—so singing, the poet takes refuge in the Lord, asserting nine times that he has none to think of except the Lord—'*Niṉṉai alāl iṉi ārai niṉaikkēṉe*'—"Whom shall I think of except Yourself?" That is the very life of the poem and its refrain. The renouncing of the worldly relationship (3), the fear of death (6), the misery of birth (3) egg him on to get rid

of his faults and misery through the service to the followers of *Śiva* (4)—finally to give up all egoistic efforts and to surrender to the Lord with nothing but a loin cloth on him and the sacred ash (2)

Those who sing this *hymn* which expresses the experience of the poet when he has completely renounced this world and has reached something beyond this world—the *Paralōka,* will also, according to *Nampi Ārūrar,* reach the same happiness and joy of the Beyond (10)

IV

It is very difficult to believe that this *hymn* of complete renunciation could have been sung at this stage while he was living with *Paravai,* unless the description of the loin cloth is to be taken symbolically or as referring to the Lord Himself, (*'Meypūci'* will then become the noun)—interpretations which will be very forced and artificial in the context of the *hymn.* It will be, therefore, more appropriate as coming at the fag end of his life, in that period of his life when he sang the *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam hymn* (*Hymn* 4, see especially verse 8) which even *Cēkkiḻār* feels was sung when *Nampi Ārūrar* wanted to renounce the domestic life (*Periya Purāṇam, Veḷḷāṉaiccarukkam, v.* 29). The same may be said of the following *hymns* as well and that is one reason why we have grouped them all in a separate chapter for being considered to have been sung in his pilgrimage after our poet met *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ.* The geographical agreement is not affected as these songs are sung at the period of his visit to *Tiruvaiyāṟu* a place for which there is a *hymn* which is even according to *Cēkkiḻār* sung only when our poet had met *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ.* That is why we had grouped together all these *hymns* on the basis of *Cēkkiḻār.*

TIRUVĀṈAIKKĀ

(*Hymn* 75)

I

Love for a person reaches its zenith when anything connected with the person also excites the same love. The extreme point of our love to God according to *Vaiṣṇavites* is the love felt for the followers of God. In various places of the previous *hymns* starting from his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai, Nampi Ārūrar* has been hinting at this truth. In the *Tirutoṇṭattokai,* soon after the realization of this truth, we saw him fall at the feet of every one of the *Bhaktas* whose names have become popular in his days, crying, "I am the servant of His servants". In other places, he has furnished particulars about their worship, their leadership and his following their path and thus becoming saved.

In the previous *hymn* he has told us that it was service unto them that had enabled him to cut himself away from all paths of sins. In this present *hymn,* born of his experience, he makes an objective statement of truth that those who take refuge in the pair of shining rosy feet (5) of the Lord accepting Him as their Master with the solemn affirmation of love, those who worship the Almighty as their father (4), God (2) and Lord (1), everyday contemplating on Him and feeling merciful (7), praising Him day and night (8) are the Lords of us all as well, Lords who have us too as their servants accepting our service and offering us salvation. Herein he gives the characteristic features of the *Bhaktas,* those who take refuge in Him (1), who accept Him as their Lord (1) and father (4), contemplating on Him and praising Him every day and being full of mercy (7).

II

Thus contemplating on the *Bhaktas,* our poet feels that he has himself become one who is now capable of leading a worthy life contemplating on the Lord being inspired by such contemplation with mercy standing firm in the shady golden feet of the Lord

Who is the beginning of everything and remaining firm as a *Toṇṭaṉ* under that Feet as his great refuge. That is how the *hymn* works a spiritual revolution in the minds of its readers and therefore our poet assures us that those who are masters of this munificent *Tamiḻ* garland of a *hymn* will not only be rid of their seven births but also accept us all as their servants to bring out our salvation (10)

III

How *Bhaktas* contemplate on the Lord or how the Lord appears to *Nampi Ārūrar* in the present context becomes interesting from this point of view. "The Lord is all the four *Vēdas* and all other things, the Lord of *hymns* and all walks of life, the Ancient and the Good" (1). "He is the blotless, He is the father, the Mother and the inner principle of this world. He is the Lord who is all attachment upto the true *tapasvins*" (4). "He is the great Master and *Guru* (*Tiruvaṭikaḷ*) of those who are full of good qualities" (4). "For those who go round Him, He is the medicine which cures their chronic *karma*" (9)

IV

The *Purāṇic* stories are also referred to and must be taken to signify the same truths about the Lord. "The poison arose and spread out and the people in order to save themselves cried out, "Eat" and as a simpleton He ate the poison and His throat turned blue. He makes this description dramatic by calling them '*vañcar*', the cheats, for pretending that the poison was something eatable" (2). The description suggests that the Lord is full of mercy even to swallow the poison to save others, though He is the learned one, who had given forth to the world the works of various knowledge (*aṅkam ōtiya* — 2). The poet refers to the *koṉṟai* flower, the damsel of the river, the crescent moon and the serpents — all on the ruddy mat-lock of our Father who sits under the banyan tree (3). The story of the destruction of the three cities is also given (5) along with the description of the Lord riding on the bull in the company of the Mother (6) clothing Himself with the skins of deer and tiger (8), wearing ornaments which cannot be valued '*vilaiyili*' (6). There is a pun on the phrase '*vilaiyili*' which may mean precious and valuable, or valueless or beyond valuation, for, His ornaments, the serpents, the bones and the ash appear to be valueless to those who do not understand their sig-

nificance, while to the mystics they appear to be full of significance and value. The stories of the destruction of the *Kālaṉ* (Death) (9) and *Kāmaṉ* (9) and the gift of the discus to *Viṣṇu* are also referred to (10). The local story of the *Cōḻa* losing his necklace or pearls whilst bathing in the *Kāviri* which is often spoken of as the wife of the *Cōḻā*[1] and praying to God that He may accept his lost necklace, when the Lord in the temple of *Tiruvāṉaikkā* in response to his request accepted the gift and appeared with the necklace (7) of pearls — a story which once again proves the miracle revealing the greatness of worshippers like this king and the love the Lord who is ready to fulfil their requests.

V

The beauty of the holy place is also described in relation to the flowing Grace of the Lord readily answering the prayers of *Bhaktas*, the Grace suggesting the flow of the river *Kāviri* of beautiful and resounding waters of ripples and waves — the cool and lovely river coming to embrace (and save) the world.

1. *Pulavāy vāḻi Kāvēri—Cilappatikāram—Kāṉal vari.*

CHAPTER XXV

TIRUPPĀÇÇILĀCCIRĀMAM

(*Hymn* 14)

I

A feeling of depression overcomes the poet when in his worldly view he feels that the Lord is loosening His grips on him. Certain amount of bitterness rises in his mind against the Lord and he cries, "Is there no patron but He?" It is the privilege of a lover to feel sulky about the acts of his beloved and about what one feels as the indifference on the part of the other whether the indifference is real or not. Bouderies (*Ūṭal*) according to *Vaḷḷuvar* sweetens and hightens the joy of love.[1] It really represents the attempt at overcoming the feeling of duality and as long as this does not lead to any breaking away, it leads to the final union and ecstasy. The duality has to be overcome by these means of love: the recurring moods of sulkiness are so many steps. The poet himself in the last verse assures us that the verses, though they may seem to be so on the surface, are not really songs of derision or reproach. He feels that the Lord should put up with this kind of speech from a follower like him. The interrogation, "Is there no Lord but He?" implies a negative answer that there is no other Lord.

Our poet here satirically gives a description of his absolute surrender to the Lord which inspires the interrogation, "Is there no other Lord?" when he feels that there is no loving response. It is a cry of despair in the midst of the darkness he feels enshrouding him when the beloved leaves him in the twinkling of an eye. This *hymn* is, therefore, important as revealing to us his self-surrender and the spiritual height reached by our poet thereby.

II

"I have dedicated my *trikaraṇa*—my head, my tongue and my mind—to Him alone. I have ordained myself to Him and to

1. *Tirukkuṟaḷ:* 1330.

the service unto His beautiful feet. There has been no pretension or cheating, herein. If I begin to describe it, it may look as though I am describing something ideal to be compared with something real and that way my description may appear to be an exaggeration and self praise whereas it is the barest truth" (1). "*Uraittakkāl uvamaṉē okkum*" has been a problem for commentators. '*Uvamaṉ*' has been interpreted as the dumb being by *Tamil* Lexicon, which probably interprets the phrase to mean, "If I begin to describe, I have to become one like the dumb". Others have taken it to mean that the Lord is, like unto Himself. A few have taken the '*uvamaṉ*' to mean a pretension, something which looks alike on the surface though not the same in reality. '*Uvamaṉ*' corresponds to the Sanskrit word '*upamā*', something with which a thing described is compared with and according to books on rhetoric the '*upamā*', should be representing the highwater-mark of perfection in the field in which the comparison is attempted — '*Uyarntataṉ mēṟṟē uḷḷuṅkālai*" (*Tol., S.*, 1224). It is this meaning we have attempted to explain.

"I do not cry Mother or Father. I remain satisfied by calling you 'my Lord'. 'My Lord', think also of me as one who still exists and show me an iota of your holy love" (2). (This cry of surrender may mean that he has no longer any attachment to his father or mother. Perhaps this interpretation is not very important in the present context of the *hymn*, though that meaning will support our assigning a later period to this *hymn*. It is better to interpret this cry as meaning that the poet has not taken refuge in the Lord as his father or mother but as his Lord and Master expecting no parental love but merely the protection and sustenance which the slave usually expects at the hands of the Lord completely effacing his individuality, having no personality of his own except that of the Lord, thinking of the Lord, speaking His praises and performing His services. In the *Ramāyaṇa*, as the *Vaiṣṇavites* point out, when *Sumitrā*, the mother of *Lakṣmaṇa*, advises him to follow *Rāma* to the forest, she specifically warns him against thinking of the relationship of *Rāma's* brotherhood and advises him to go after him as his slave and servant; for, the thought of blood-relationship will lead to egotism whilst the feeling of service will inspire complete self-surrender, making him pray, "Thy will, will be done". It is this kind of self-surrender that our poet is also hinting at, when he himself cries to reach the ears of the Lord).

III

At this stage the poet seems to read the mind of the Lord in his own way. He feels that the Lord is thinking of saving the followers at a later stage. Here our saint as a great poet reaches a higher stage and makes his personal grief, the universal grief of all the *Bhaktas*. God's procrastination makes him all the more bitter and he cries, "If He were to bless His followers only later on, is there no other Lord but He ?" (2).

"I do not experience the firmly established truth of the Lord except when I embrace Him (or, as some others take it, "when the miseries batter on me"). Therefore, I thought, it was enough if my mind was always contemplating on Him in mental embrace. He is the Lord who destroys the obstructions and the three '*malas*' as the three castles of the air, swallowing poison to save His followers. Inspite of whatever we may say in extenuation or otherwise, if He is happy when He gains us and is sulky when He is not so profited. "Is there no other Lord but He?" (3'. The idea of lovers lurks behind this *hymn*. The poet is happy and sure of his safety and salvation when he, so to say, is in embrace with the Lord, that is in communion with Him and in contemplation on the Lord. He thinks this contemplation is enough to give this pleasure, but in a moment of depression such a contemplation fails and he cries in despair. The Lord also is happy and elated (*ukantu*) only when the soul surrenders unto Him and when He values it as the greatest gift. In interpreting the phrase '*Cuṭar aṭi*' of *Nammāḻvār* (I/I/I), *Rāmānujar* states that the feet of the Lord beam up with Light and Joy when the lost soul is recovered and received afresh by the Lord. The same idea seems to have been expressed by our poet's phrase '*Peṟṟapōtu ukantu*'. Naturally it implies that the Lord will be despising Himself and feeling miserable when the soul is not thus recovered and saved;—of course this is the only way in which we can express the feeling of the Lord, in a mundane way, though it may not be correct. The poet, therefore, feels that when he feels miserable losing the loving embrace of the Lord, the Lord Himself feels miserable and remorseful (3).

"The Lord does not speak out, his tongue does not utter words like these—'these are our men: those are others; this is good: that is bad', for He makes no such distinction. There is no external show of his love. He accepts many a people as their Lord for

saving them all but there is not a word of sympathy. He gives not a single thing. "Is there no Lord but He ?" (4).

This cry gives expression to the Lord's love for all trying to save us all. It is the story of the prodigal son where the good receive no extra word of kindness or any present. The feeling of worldy suffering makes the good soul also cry not out of jealousy but out of the misunderstood feeling of separation and indifference.

"It is true, He is the destroyer of the three cities (5). But once the soul turns to Him with love, incessantly praising and contemplating on Him, from that moment, He feels for it and blesses it as His servant worthy of all praise; He feels indeed so much that its moment of separation is felt as the moment of His death. (Or, this may mean that He blesses the souls from the very moment of their dedication to Him, those who love Him so much as to feel the day of cessation of their services as the day of their death). If He, whatever we may say, leaves us separated in a twinkling of one eye, is there no Lord but He?" (5).

IV

"I do not even step into the place where had walked the people performing *tapas* or sacrifice of evil or cruelty. The cruel and evil *karmas* will certainly destroy us. Sure of this conviction, I know only the *tapas* of service unto His feet and I know not any one else. This, my Lord knows. But He carries the chief weapon of Trident, (something like a Cross of suffering for us all) and does nothing but is besmearing us all with the ashes. If this is all He does, is there no other Lord but He?" (6). Here is an assertion of our poet's complete self-surrender and he calls the Lord himself to bear witness to this—renunciation of all attachment signified by the purity of the besmeared ashes—a revelation, by the way, of the great spiritual development reached by our poet. (6).

The poet's heart-rending cry continues: (What is it that He can give?"'—the Lord of the skull and the graveyard? If He appears to be all true but does only acts of falsehood, "Is there no other Lord but He?" (7). The falsehood is his disappointment. The beloved feels that He will never leave the lover; the anxiety of the beloved imagines His separation against His promise and thus arises the accusation of playing false to the beloved (7).

"This is a fattening body. I will never conclude that it is permanent. I have turned inwards and relied upon the mind, contemplating on Him, as my prop. (I have bathed myself as it were in the group of your followers—*i.e.*, I have been in communion with them. I praise and worship with my hand, fall at your feet and rise up a changed man—all this I do, day and night, in a world of contemplation or thought. If unconcerned He dances on the graveyard of corpses, holding a serpent in His hand, is there no other Lord but He?" Is this not what we have described elswhere as the Dance of the Absolute in the Heart of renunciation and Love? (8).

"O, my mind! you melt in love, run in joy and embrace Him to perform daily the services however menial they be. He blesses those who do not waste away all their appointed days and who before that day comes, invoke Him as "My Lord" even though they may be devoid of Love. "The great Man of mine!. If inspite of all that we may say, He does not put up with our faults and give us nothing, is there no Lord but He?" (9). This cry reveals a Lord of love who is at the same time the Lord of morals, the latter form appearing more stern to the followers when they turn worldwards. The beloved feels that the lover has misunderstood one's playful acts and, therefore, has taken them seriously, as to mean His leaving away without any token of love.

In the moment of self-surrender when the poet is overcome by a feeling of renunciation, he contemplates on the form of the Lord, as the great Lord of renunciation, appearing with the loin-cloth and the finely powdered white ashes. By the force of this contemplation the vision of the Lord appears—the Lord of the sapphire throat—the Lord of Love, feasting on poison for others. The *trikaraṇas* of the poet are converted and transformed. "I speak of Him; I think of Him—I am always in His service (*Toṇṭaṉ*) —with all my mind. He holds the serpent in His hand—this Lord of *Pāccil*. He accepts me as His servant. He has embraced me hard but if he were to loosen His embrace, is there no other Lord but He?" (10). (This interpretation proceeds on the basis of the reading '*Piṇippilar*'. There is another reading '*Paṇippilar*' when the phrase will mean "If He does not speak or order, is their no other Lord but He?". '*Piṇippaṭa*' may also mean that he accepted destroying the other fetters or diseases).

"Not only in this birth alone but in all the sevenfold births, I have been His servant and slave. I have become also the servant of His servants. I am His, by right. My heart melts in love. My Lord of *Pāccil* who blesses those of rare fame! Pray, show me your russet feet! If He talks big and acts low, is there no Lord but He?" (11). Talking big and acting low mean the same thing as '*Meyyarē ottōr poy ceyvatu*' (7)—to appear Truthful and to act Falsely.

"These are not words of reproach; these are not words of contempt. My fame has spread as of one who ever cries, 'O, My Lord! (I have taken refuge in Him with all my *trikaraṇas*). Many a day I have fallen at His feet. I have spoken of Him with my own mouth and contemplated on Him with my mind. If the Lord will not put up with the words (of love) thus spoken by *Ārūraṉ* of *Nāval* of fertile fields, is there no Lord but He?" (12).

V

Knowing His eternal relationship with us, taking refuge as of right in Him in all the three spheres of our activity—mind, body and tongue, all of which sincerely hanker after Him, dedicating himself for ever and all the day and night to His services, and to the services of His followers, feeling as His beloved as though dead when separated from His service, never being in the company of others of wasteful *tapas*, the poet is seen at the height of his divine spirituality. It is not without significance that he applies his own description of the worshipful followers to himself (9 and 11). He includes other followers with Himself and utters the cry as the all piercing cry of the Lovers or *Bhaktas* (2). The cry goes up from his heart, when as the beloved of the Lord he feels His embrace loosening round him. In this way is also revealed the Love of the Lord—the Mad in love—the Lover of Lovers—the Lord who blesses those renouncing all their attachments and crying up to Him.

VI

The *purāṇic* personality of the Lord is described in this *hymn*, as explained above to fit it with the cry of his heart—the loin cloth (1, 10), the ashes (6, 10), the serpent in His hand, (8, 10), the madness (1), the destruction of the three cities (3, 5), the sapphire throat (3, 10), the trident (6), the skill (7), the grave-

yard (7, 8), the skeleton (7), the sacred thread (7), the mat-lock (7), the crescent moon (7), the form of art (*vikirtar*) (7), as opposed to Nature are all referred to.

VII

The beauty of the place is not forgetten; it appears as the very loving form of the Lord—the cool and natural tank full of swarming swans (2), (or the tank which transforms itself into our food whilst feeding the paddy fields and becoming the sap and the ripening there after into the paddy of the plants)—the tank which resounds with the swarming of birds of the fields of growing gold of paddy (4) where bathe the beautiful doll-like damsels (7). The beauty is also holiness and it is there those who have cut away all their attachment, throng and it is there the Lord blesses them.

VIII

The place is called '*Pāccilāśramam*'—the *Āśramam* of *Pāccil,* one of the parts of the country on the northern banks of Coleroon, perhaps reminiscent of the *Āśramas* of the *Ṛṣis* described in the *Rāmāyaṇa. Pāccil—'pacu' + il*—may mean the house of green leaves. Our poet has referred to it as *Kuṭa-p Pāccil'* and it has been suggested that *Pāccil* itself may be a corruption of the word '*Pratīci*' (West).

TIRUPPAIÑÑĪLI

(*Hymn* 36)

I

There have been recurring references to the Dancing and Singing Beggar in the previous *hymns,* revealing the esoteric significance of this form. In the last *hymn,* this Lord holding up the serpent in His hand, peeped in many a time. Though His form was not the central theme, yet it became the background, with the suggestion of the Beloved. The Beloved cannot raise the question, "Is there no other Lord but He?" (14). If it is taken as the speech of the Lady-companion as playfully putting aside the Lover, it may be fitting according to the conventions of *Tamil* erotic poetry. Therefore, the suggestion remains underground whilst our poet as *Nampi Ārūrar* sends up the cry of his heart. But he slowly gets immersed in that experience of Love of the Hound of the Heaven in the form of *Bhikṣāṭana,* coming begging for our Love. In that overwhelming experience, he stands transformed, as the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators on *Nālāyiram* usually explain, into a woman, the beloved of our Lord, one of the damsels to whose door, the Lord of a Beggar is said to have gone a-begging and he sings like those damsels. In the last verse of this *hymn,* our poet states that this *hymn* has been composed on the model of a dramatic speech of those many damsels of lightning-like subtle waists, expressing their love unto the Lord.

The Love is there in the hearts of the damsels; but there is also the fear and the sulking which prevent the complete communion. The references to the *Bhikṣāṭana* form, in this *hymn,* has been discussed at length in our study of the delineation of *Bhikṣāṭana* by *Nampi Ārūrar.* The form here, in this *hymn,* represents the Natural Beauty of the Forest and the Lord is addressed in every verse at its very end as *"Āraṇīya viṭaṅkarē".*

II

"What is the use of your blue throat and the skull? Pray; accept alms in one house. Is that necklace of yours a ser-

pent?" (1), asks one damsel in all love, at the last moment withdrawing frightened by the serpent.

"Ah! the bull looks terrible with its roar; the fiery mouthed serpent hisses. Pray, do not come my Lord, with the serpent in your hand!" (2) asks another terrified by the bull and the serpent whilst losing herself in love.

"Your form is pure; your mouth is pure; your eyes (look) are pure. But yours is a stitched up bit of a cloth. Pray, leave off dancing with the ghosts. My Lord, why this? Are you mad?" (3) is another love speech of a damsel impressed by His purity but surprised by His mad dance.

"You sing. Are you a master of the beautiful *Tamil* tunes? What is this? You come and stand with the serpent of ruddy eyes dancing in your front arm. Our love cannot allow us to refuse the alms; but your serpent cannot allow us to offer the alms. Ah! Forest Beauty! Is the Heaven of the setting sun your form?" is another speech, expressing her love of His dance, song and form (4).

"The ash on your form shines white like pearl. You hold the skull in your hand and state that you are of *Paiññīli.* But you come with the Mother sharing your body and we cannot offer our alms. Pray, walk away. Are you of the mat-lock carrying the river?" (5), asks another in love but ashamed to confess her love in the presence of the Mother Goddess.

"Have you ordained yourself for stealing away the bangles of the damsels of beautiful tresses of hair smelling sweet with the fragrance of '*kuravam*' flower. In this adventure or escapade, can you recognize this house even in the dark night? Are you capable of walking in and escaping from here? Pray tell me, are you an expert in making the serpent dance?" (6), is a damsel's expression of love, a love which it has reached the stage of nocturnal clandestine escapade

"You wear beautiful flowers. But why then adorn yourself with bones? The graveyard is your city; the skull is all you possess. What then do your lovers get from you? You stand saying, 'I am of *Paiññīli*'. Pray tell me, are you a master of music and dance?' (7) is another dramatic speech of humour.

"All kinds of flowers, the river *Ganges,* the crescent moon, the skull and the feather of crane lie within your mat-lock. You stand, stating that you are of *Paiññīli.* Pray, tell, us, have you covered yourself with the flayed skin of the elephant?" (8). That is how the damsel impressed with divine harmony speaks.

"You dance singing, in accompaniment to the orchestra of all musical instruments and stand saying that you are of *Paiññīli.* What! pray tell us, why have you adorned yourself with bones and tortoise?" (9) is the loving speech of one taken away by His dance but startled by the bones and tortoise shell.

"A serpent on your arm, a serpent on your waist, a serpent on your neck—they hang loose and low on your back. You besmear this form of yours with ashes on. You sing the *Vēdas* and music. You slowly come and stand across our path as though forcing yourself on our modesty and state that you are of *Paiññīli.* Pray, tell us, 'What is this beggary of yours'" (10) is the final speech before denial.

These dramatic speeches express the beauty of this love scene—the eternal love scene of the Lord and the loving souls, marking various stages of love-making of the Lord and responses of the damsels till the stage is reached where the Beloved, as it were attempting on their modesty as is revealed in the last speech of the damsels.

III

That *Nampi Ārūrar* it is, who is singing this *hymn* is made clear by certain statements about the Lord which the damsels of the *Dārukavana* could not have made. "The whole world praises and worships you alone falling at your feet. You cut away completely the attachment of the *Karmas* of those who sing and praise you every day"—these are the personal experiences of our poet, which he exclaims even when he becomes the Beloved Damsel.

IV

The beautiful place where this love scene is enacted must have been an area surrounded by forest—a place of flower gardens, fertile fields and waters. The poet sees surrounding this *Paiññīli,* the green waters teasing with their waves the sandal, *vēṅkai,*

kōṅku, akil and *champak,* which have stood in their way as though arrayed in war against them (2). The waters flow into the moat of the city full of lotuses. The cool and green '*mātavi*' and '*puṉṉai*' form the green gardens surrounding the city (3). These groves send up the fragrance from the great flowers cool and fresh (4), the groves where the singing bees hum their music (7) and where on all sides, sing the *cuckoo* (9). The swans flock together in the fields surrounding *Paiññīli,* (11) whose firm rooted fame is of the ancient variety.

V

The poet whilst singing this *hymn* experiences the divine peace and love, spoken of as the russet feet of the Lover of the Mother which, he assures those who sing to music these songs of his words of mouth concentrating on its meaning, will also attain (11).

CHAPTER XXVII

TIRUPPĀṆṬIKKOṬUMUṬI

(*Hymn* 48)

I

In this *hymn*, our poet narrates to the Lord the process of his self-surrender unto Him, a self-surrender which has now become his own nature—something habitual—a stage of development higher than the one till now revealed to us by the *hymns*, thus justifying our placing this *hymn* with those of a later period. The old sulking, however, is still remembered.

II

The sacred *mantra* of the *Śaivites* is the *Pañcākṣara* or the Five Letters, *'Na ma śi vā ya'* whose gross meaning is 'Worship unto *Śiva*. "I am not mine but *Śiva's*", is the meaning which demands the self-surrender. Here '*Ya*' stands for the soul, '*va*' for God's Grace, '*Śi*' for the Absolute, '*Na*' for the power of the Lord which hides the Truth from us till the soul reaches its perfection so as to see the vision of the Truth and '*Ma*' for the *Mala* or imperfection or ignorance taking the form of matter, evil, *etc*. The soul gets away from '*Mala*' and the hiding power, to take refuge in the Grace of the Lord, the Grace being spoken of as the Feet. After a stage, the soul loses itself in communion; the distinction—the Absolute and its Grace—also disappears; the experience of the Absolute alone remains. It is the experience of the *Pañcākṣara* that is described in this *hymn* and its various stages.

III

"I had no other attachment. I contemplated on your Sacred feet alone. It was when I attained this escape from the Hiding Power ('*Na*'), I was really born,—till then I was a dead thing, identified with dead matter ('*Ma*'). I reached further the stage of not dying any more—no sliding back into the '*malas*'. Even if I forget, my tongue will utter this truth '*Namaśivāya*'." The duality between the conscious and the unconscious had been broken; the higher truth has soaked through the conscious to the

unconscious creating thereby a superconscious and spiritual unity (1).

This love of God reaches its perfection when it blossoms into the love of Men, the followers of the Lord. This is expressed in this sacred verse. "I am your lover. I never consider those days when I slight those who worship your feet (or when I am slighted by them) except, as days of oblivion and days of destruction. Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the *mantra Namaśivāya*" (2).

"I never consider those days of separation—the days when I cease thinking of you—except as days of failing consciousness, as days of departing life and as days of balancing on the funeral pyre. Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the *mantra Namaśivāya*" (3).

"O, my Patron of limitless fame! The Lord of my father! My gold! My precious gem! Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the mantra *Namaśivāya*" (4). The poet forgets himself in the divine experience which he begins to describe only to become dumb after calling Him, Lord and the precious thing.

Old memories get revived in this speechless stage. "I, your slave, also was in great fright—overpowered by the delusion and misery of the world—I cried to you in the hope that the Beginning of everything is the Fortress for the Frightened. You have blessed me with your Grace, consoling and encouraging me with the words, "Fear Not". Is there now anything of yours that will be wasted because of this mercy shown? (Why then do you not continue encouraging me)? Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the *mantra Namaśivāya*" (5).

But the memory of his sulking is transitory. The contemplation of the beautiful form of the Lord transports him to a stage of Bliss when the unpleasant memories, past and present vanish except to the extent of his singing the chorus of the song. The tender leaflike crescent moon on the crown, the girdle of the dancing serpent around the tiger skin on His waist, he sees and exclaims, "O, Beautiful, One", Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the *mantra Namaśivāya*" (6).

"I have contemplated affectionately on your feet of flowers and lo, my fetters of *Karma* have broken down" (7). In this mood of wonder he forgets himself except to sing the chorus,

The beauty of the place captivates him and he proceeds to describe it.

The beauty of His *purāṇic* personality and the beauty of the place become one in this stage of joy. "O, Lord of the gold mat-lock, O, thou who hast aimed at the three cities! Loving the company of the Damsel of fragrant tresses of hair, you love also intensely the *Pāṇṭikkoṭumuṭi* of beauty"—"Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the *mantra Namaśivāya*" (8).

He cried out a little while ago, "My Lord, the Lord of my father, the gold and my precious gem!" He sees here the *Dēvas* repeating like mad men the same words and eight thousand crore other names of the Lord, the father of the *Cāraṇa* (scout) of *Gaṇapati*. The *purāṇic* personality and his vision of love appear before him, there inside the temple of *Koṭumuṭi* in '*Kaṟaiyūr*' where worship *Nārāyaṇa* and *Brahma* and he cries, "Even if I forget, my tongue will give expression to the *mantra Namaśivāya*" (9).

The poet enjoys the *purāṇic* personality and lovingly repeats its descriptions. The whole *hymn* is thus a *hymn* of ecstasy; having thus experienced it whilst composing this *hymn*, our poet assures us that those who repeat the words of this *hymn*—without even singing it—will be devoid of all miseries (10).

IV

The beauty of the *purāṇic* personality becomes enchanting,—the mat-lock (*caṭai-piññakam*) (10), the *koṉṟai* flower (10), the crescent moon (6, 10), the destruction of the three cities (8), the company of the Mother (8), the poison (5), the bones (6), the tiger's skin (6), the serpent as girdle and *araiññāṉ* (6), the fatherhood of *Gaṇapati* (9), the worship by *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* and the *Dēvas* (9), the form of the mad man (10), the Beginning of everything (9) and Birthlessness (10).

V

The first words of every fourth line are emphatic descriptions of the Lord, compressed in a word, and also other words of address. The poet as a *tapasvin* renouncing all attachment and taking refuge in Him, looks upon God as the Great but Good *Tapasvin* of Love—*Naṟṟavaṉ* (1)—*Naṟṟavam* is to be contrasted with *Ceṭittavam* already referred to in the previous *hymn*. The Dancing beggar and His loving speeches of such oratorical powers and His

Great Light beyond all Lights are remembered. He is the Dancer (*Naṭṭavā*—2); the Master of the tongue or speech (*Nāvalā*) (3); the Expert (*Vallavā*) (4); the *Parañjōti* (6); the Lover (*Nampaṉ*) (8); (*Virumpaṉ*) (7); the Mad man, mad with love (*Pittaṉ*) (10) even as the poet is his lover (*Iṭṭaṉ*) (2); the Beautiful (*Aḻakaṉ*) (6); the Gold (*Poṉ*) (9) and the Precious Gem (9). But this love has nothing immoral about it, for, He is the Great costodian of the moral path and knowledge (*Cēṭaṉ*) (6). He is the Beginning, the Cause of all Causes (*Kāraṇaṉ*) (9) having no cause for Himself, *i.e.,* He is Birthless (10); our Lord (*Pirāṉ*) (9).

VI

The holy place as has already been pointed out, captivates the imagination of the Poet. The cool and spreading, active and shining waters of *Kāviri* come and flow down, in that place and it looks as though the great Light of Lights descends down to save the world in the form of this *Kāviri* (3). The *Kāviri* not only represents the Lord but also His followers. Like them the shining waters of *Kāviri* come with the round garland for His crown to worship at His feet and to praise Him with its sound (2). Yes, it praises (6). The beautiful and cool *Kāviri* rushes down with its cool waters singing a music of its own (6). As though imitating *Kāviri,* the followers, these good people—fall at His feet and praise Him on the banks of *Kāviri* coming rushing down pushing along the stones, to shower fertility (4). The Damsels of the place (who by their chastity bring about this fertility of the rains) or equally divine as the *Bhaktas* and they dive and bathe—these doll-like damsels of soft feet, coloured red with cotton (5). The groves are thick and stand beautifully surrounding the *Kāviri* banks wherefrom the young garland-like girls of soft and round shaped bosom dive (7) and bathe in the river and where on the branches of the trees the *cuckoos* sing and the peacocks dance as though in a concert (8). The holy worship of God is, therefore, a peculiar beauty of this place. The learned men, the good souls and the beautiful damsels—all worship the Lord—paying thus the homage of Truth, Beauty and Goodness (9). Even the *Kāviri* appears to our Saint worshipping the Lord with the wreath for His crown. Our poet gives us the popular methods of worship of his age—adorning the Lord with '*Vācikai*' (2) or 'round wreath' of laurel and reciting crores (9) of His names.

CHAPTER XXVIII

TIRUVEÑCAMĀKKŪṬAL

(*Hymn* 42)

I

In the last *hymn* we saw our poet in the midst of his subjective exclamations, losing himself in the natural beauty of the Holy place appearing before him almost reminding him of the Lord and His overflowing love. He is completely under the influence of this enchantment of Nature appearing as the very form of the Lord—the bewitching beauty of Art form of *Veñcamākkūṭal* (*Veñcamākkūṭal Vikirtā* in each verse) with its river—the very abode of the Lord, *Sivalōkam,* overflowing with His Grace aboundings. It is because of this experience that the poet assures us that the masters of the ten verses of this *Tamiḻ* garland of perfect words are sure to reside in the *Śivalōka.*

II

In thus experiencing the Lord as Omnipresent and the lovingly beautifying Nature full with His presence, as though He were in need of all these for His Omnipresent perfection, an idea arises in his mind, whether God is not in need of him as well. Yes, every soul, every creature has to be saved; for, otherwise, the Lord and His love become incomplete and imperfect, ineffective and powerless. "You need me as well" is the expression of wonder, but in the presence of the Omnipresent Beauty and Love and Power, the old lurking feeling of duality and fear, converts this exclamation of wonder, into a cry of anxiety, "Will you want me?" and into a prayer of despair, "Pray, be desirous of me as well".

III

In the first three stanzas except the chorus, "*Veñcamākkūṭal Vikirtā aṭiyēṉaiyum vēṇṭutiyē*", the poet is completely under the divine enhancement of the beauty of Nature inside which the Lord is enshrined. There is the river (*Ciṟṟaṟu*—1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9)—

a symbol or a form of the overflowing love of God. On its eastern bank stands *Veñcamākkūṭal* full of the beauty of Nature and Art, enshrining God in its temple. The river dashes against the banks with its gifts as though forcing the world to receive its loving blessings, a world which goes its way without caring to be saved by this flow of love. But the loving waters enjoy this saving overflow and this rush of theirs (*Tiḷaittu*). The river throws down the bamboos with such force that they split and yield up to it, their shining pearls. The river throws the wealth of pearls, and fragrant spices of cardamom, clove, *takkōlam* and ginger into its rushing waters and swells up in joy to dash against the banks.

As mentioned before, on its eastern bank stands the *Veñcamākkūṭal* full of the leafy Mango-trees, the bent '*Puṉṉai*' and the '*Ñaḷal*' trees and '*Kurukkatti*' on which the *cuckoos* never cease singing whilst the rein-deer gets frightened. "O, Beauty of Art-form of this *Veñcamākkūṭal*! Pray, be desirous of me as well" (1).

"The river swelling up with joy carries throwing into its restless waters, the round shaped precious gems, the sandal and *akil*, to fill up many a tank and pits and dashes against the banks. On its eastern bank stands *Veñcamākkūṭal* of wealthy palaces, towers and gem-bedecked-*maṇṭapas* or Halls, going up, become one with the shining moon inside the clouds (as though presenting the very form of the Lord crowned with the moon). O, Beauty of Art-form of *Veñcamākkūṭal!* Pray, be desirous of me as well" (2).

Our suggestion that the river appears as an idol of the Lord receives further support in the third poem where the poet describes the river receiving the worship of the beautiful damsels. The innumerable damsels, shy and coy like the deer of the mountains, of lovely beauty, like peacocks—the good souls of beautiful eyes like the well shaped spears come and bow down. The river swells up and dashes against the banks carrying valuable things rolling them all into its waters full of waves. On the eastern bank stands the city surrounded by the fragrant gardens, cool because of the harmony of the innumerable varieties of crowding trees, the rows of arecanut palms, the long-legged cocoanut palms and the short-legged jack trees. O, Beauty of Art-form! Pray, be desirous of me as well" (3).

IV

In the fourth verse our poet, instead of suggesting the Lord as in other verses, openly describes the *purāṇic* personality of the Lord in addition to his original scheme of describing the river and the city, which more patently suggests that very form of His *purāṇic* personality. "The damsel of music-like speech is on one part of your body and you never leave off your attachment to the graveyard. The river teases and tosses up, cool '*akil*' and the beautiful *chauries.* On its eastern bank stands the city of *Veñcamākkūṭal,* where young damsels dance to the tune of the flute and the musical drum inside the gem bedecked music hall going up to become one with the moon of the Heavens. O, the Beauty of the art form! pray be desirous of me as well" (4). The idea of the Mother and the Lord's hall of Dance inspire the poet to describe the damsels in the dance hall of the city.

The *purāṇic* personality of the Lord again captivates the mind of the poet and under the influence of its enchantment he forgets his present scheme of describing the river and the city. The form of the Lord dancing with the '*tōṭu*' and the '*kuḻai*" suggesting the *Ardhanārīśvara* comes to the mind of the poet. In the dance escapes the fragrant '*koṉṟai*' flower (*Kaḷaiyē kamaḻum*—is not quite clear. '*Kaḷai*' may be the accusative of the '*Kaḷ*' or honey with its central '*ḷ*' elided. Then '*kamaḻum*' must become causative. Or, '*Kaḷai*' may mean that which has become separated escaping in the swift movements of the dance. '*Kaḷai*' also means beauty but that usage seems to be not earlier than the age of *Tāyumāṉavar.* '*Kaḷai*' may also mean something soft). This idea of the flower at once reminds the poet of the '*Kaṟpaka* tree' of the Heavens giving everything desired and he at once addresses the Lord as the great '*Kaṟpakā*' blessing those in communion with Him—an expression of his own experience clothed in the form of a universal truth. The crescent moon which forms this description comes to our poet's mind along with His mat-lock. But these stories have a beginning and that may suggest these acts of love have come in, as something unconnected with the nature of the Lord. The stories may have a beginning but He has no beginning whatsoever. These are the manifestations of His Nature which continues to be the same always. Except those who are in communion with Him and crying to Him for His help, none else can attain Him. This is not any freak of His. He is the

Lord of *Dharma* or the Law in the form of the pure white bull. Having thus described the love of the Lord, he prays, "O, Beauty of the Art-form of the city of *Veñcamākkūṭal,* pray, be desirous of me as well" (5).

In the next verse, the poet seems to be sure of Lord's Grace. "You are easy of approach to those who fall at your feet and you stand before them so that they may be devoid of all miseries". The *'koṉṟai'* flower on the mat-lock and the bull and the destruction of the three cities come to his mind. The beauty of the harmony of these makes him exclaim, "O, Beauty". The dance has been in his mind in the previous verses along with the music and the drum and now in this verse our poet speaks of the Lord as the expert dancer in the hall of the grave-yard where resound unceasingly the drum and the music and the dance. The festivity of the dance brings him back to the city of *Veñcamākkūṭal* whose streets are so full of festivals and festivities. Addressing the Lord as the beauty of the Art-form, he concludes with his chorus of a prayer, "Pray be desirous of me also" (6).

In the next verse, he forgets every description about the city and the river, describing only the *purāṇic* personality of the Lord and refers thus: to the flaying of the elephant, the dance of fire in the graveyard, the bull, the *koṉṟai* flower and the serpent with its thousand hoods and fiery poison (as something suggesting the fully evolved universe in its terrifying aspect, which our scientists speak of as Nature being red in tooth and nail). He concluded with the chorus, "Pray, be desirous of me also" (7).

The world once again captivates the mind of the poet and he describes according to his original scheme the river and the city. "The river tumbles down over-shining precious gems and fragrant sandals and *'akils'* through its passage through forests, mountains and the country side and joyfully dashes against the banks, rushing with the desire of reaching the place where the great One resides" (8). The poet sees his own love for God reflected in the river. On the eastern side of the bank of the river is the city *Veñcamākkūṭal* where the music and the dance of damsels of the bamboo shaped shoulders never cease dancing in accompaniment to the musical drum and the tuning flute" (8). Not only people of this great culture but also people leading a life of nature like the hunters love this place. If all sorts of people love the Lord, may not the poet also expect to be loved by the

Lord? Therefore, he sings the chorus "Pray, be desirous of me as well".

It is the dance of the Lord which is still in the mind of the poet and he refers to the *koṉṟai* flower, the serpent and the river of the mat-lock and the musical instruments which the Lord carries. He is indeed the purest of the pure. The river goes circumambulating the up-land fields throwing into its having beautiful waters everything on the way; it swells up and joyfully dashes against the banks. On its eastern bank stands the city surrounded by the dark lovable fields, the city enshrining the Lord; and our poet winds up by singing the chorus, "Pray, be desirous of me as well" (9).

V

The last verse giving the name of the poet and the final effect of reciting this *hymn* repeats the description of the damsels then bowing down before the river but now bowing down before the Lord Himself thus making it clear that the river is after all another idol of the Lord. Our poet states herein that he had out of love given expression to the prayer of the chorus, "Pray, be desirous of me as well" (10).

(*Kūṭal is coming* together. It has to signify a city where all sorts of people flock together. The city of Madurai is known as *Kūṭal*. The city of this *hymn* is a *Kūṭal* of the *Koṅku* country — a place famous then for some heated battle — *Veñcamam* — which probably has become *Veñcamā* due to the final lengthening of proper names of phrases, *e.g., Muthaiya Pillai*: *Muthaiyā Pillai*. One wonders whether the word for battle is '*cama*' — assuming the forms of *Camam* and *Camā*. Or, it may be that the final '*r*' of '*Camar*' had been wrongly read as a '*kāl*' ( ) — the sign of the long vowel). The tradition as preserved in the *Purāṇa* of this place is said to be named after '*Veñcaṉ*' the *Rākṣasa* who worshipped the Lord. To distinguish it from other *Kūṭal* it was called *Mākkūṭal*. *Kūṭal* as in the phrase and name *Mākkūṭal* means the place where rivers meet.

This *Veñcamākkūṭal* is at the place where *Kuṭavaṉam* and another brook (*Kāttāṟu*) join together and hence it was called *kūṭal*. It is near *Amarāvati* which is a bigger river when compared to which this river *Kuṭavaṉam* is only a '*ciṟṟāṟu*'.

CHAPTER XXIX

TIRUKKARKUṬI

(*Hymn* 27)

I

The despair seeks consolation and encouragement at the hands of the Lord and the poet begs of the Lord to say "Fear not". His flag of bull (*Dharma*) (1), His fragrant *konrai* flower of beauty (1), His weapon of bright white axe of power (1) (wielded for saving miraculously those taking refuge in Him) and His characteristic feature as the Supreme, as the Great Beyond all Greatness, coming and establishing Himself firmly for all times in this world to save us all at *Tirukkarkuṭi* (1), appear before his mind reminding of this Lord of Goodness, Beauty, Power, Truth and Love, saving many from fear and danger and, therefore, he cries for help, "My Master and Lord establishing Yourself firmly for all times at *Karkuṭi* surrounded by flower-groves of fragrance! Assure me as You had done to others with the words, 'Fear not' " (1).

"You are the Omnipresent and the king whom the *Vēdic* Seers and *Dēvas* worship and praise falling at your feet. (Is that all?). You are our Lord and Chief — not in mere name but in effect as well. You have become the very sweet nectar unto me." This blissful experience emboldens our poet to cry for help and encouragement to the Lord of morals and love, "Assure me also saying, Fear not" (2).

II

The destruction of the three cities is the destruction of obstruction and fear. The company of the Mother is the overflowing of His love. Our poet himself has experienced the Lord as the Medicine and Nectar on the top of the mountain, with ruddy mat-lock carrying the river of waves (in response to *Bhagīratha*, the Lord who has come to stay firmly and for ever at *Tirukkarkuṭi* (even as the cultivator goes to reside in the fields to watch and save his plants, as the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators are fond of repeating). The series of thoughts encourage him to cry to the

Lord for encouragement and for His assuring words "Fear not" even as the Lord had encouraged and saved others (3). The Lord of the form of great fame which the Formless has assumed in order that the denizens of this earth and the Heavens may praise and worship so that they may stand firm and eternal (7). His pure form of knowledge or '*Cit*' becoming the earth, water, air, fire and the great space (for sublimating and saving us all through the various experiences of these) His form of fire worshipped by *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* (8), the Lord of the rosy form (4), of the crescent moon (6) to save which he crowned Himself with it, the Lord of the blue throat (4) in the company of the Mother (4), for driving out whose fear He flayed the elephant (4), holding up in His hand the Trident (4), the battle axe (1), the deer (3), the Lord with beautiful white ear-ring (5) and the slipping loin cloth (5), carrying the Fire in His hand (8), the Lord of Greatness and Propriety, blessing the child at the cost of the life of Death (9) — these forms encourage him also to ask for the assuring words of the Lord, "Fear not".

III

The Holy places where He has established Himself is as cool as the love of the Lord, beautifully surrounded by shining and fragrant groves (1, 5), dark with shades (2) and overcast by clouds (7), surrounded by paddy fields of bunds (6) and the sweet fields of sugar canes (9) becoming more and more beautiful by the cool waters, full of waves surrounding it (10) where resort to its festivals, the Great *Tapasvins* full of art and knowledge (10).

IV

The Lord apears to him as one who will bless us with all that we desire, the *Kaṟpakam* (10) — an idea which sprouted in the previous *hymn* which he repeats here. He is the Merciful of the beautiful eyes (*Aṅkaṇaṉ* — 2), the Nectar — the *"Ārā iṉṉamudu"* (7) — unsatiable sweet nectar — a phrase so very significant to the *Vaiṣṇavites,* the Medicine on the mountain (3), the Lover (*Virumpā* — 9), the King (*Araiyā* — 6), the Master and Guru (*Aṭikēḷ* — 1), the Moral Saint (*Aṟavā* — 2), Chief (*Aiyā* — 4) and my Father (*Entāy* — 5) — the last six coming as the first words of the fourth lines with their usual emphasis in that position of vantage. The description "My Patron and Lord" (*Emperumāṉ*) is repeated six times.

V

The stories encouraging him to cry for help are stories which narrate how the Lord blessed others so that they may be saved and become great in this universe and our poet contemplating on these encouraging and inspiring stories, assures us that the masters of the valuable garland for this *hymn* will rule and save the three wide worlds (10).

VI

In this *hymn* the chorus is *Aṭiyēṉaiyum añcal eṉṉē*". But verses 9 and 5 have a different ending. The 9th chimes in, like the verses of the previous *hymn*, "*Aṭiyeṉaiyum vēṇṭutiyē*" (*H*. 42) and the 5th reminds us of the *Maḻapaṭi hymn* (*H*. 24) (Second line of the second verse) and ends with the words "*Aṭiyēṉaiyum eṉṟu-koḷḷē*" — "Accept and bear me up for myself being saved;" perhaps the variation being intended to show that all these represent a single series of connected spiritual experiences. But as we usually have the same ending in the verses of any one *hymn*, it is better to assume that all the verses ended in "*Aṭiyēṉaiyum añcal eṉṉē*", the variation having been introduced by those who remembered the phrases of the previous *hymn* wrongly in this place or according to the condition of their own mind whilst reciting this *hymn*. It must however be pointed out that the present reading as found "*Vēṇṭutiyē*" brings out the beauty of alliteration with the initial word "*Virumpā*" rather than the suggested reading of "*Añcal eṉṉē*" unless the initial word also is to be taken as "*Arumpā*" (the bud of creation).

CHAPTER XXX

TIRUPPURAMPAYAM

(*Hymn* 35)

I

This is a *hymn* addressed by the poet to his own mind advising it to start at once for going to *Tiruppurampayam* for worshipping the Lord in view of the ephemeral and transitory nature of the worldly life and of the unfailing effects of *Karma*. The second, the third and the sixth refer to the ephemeral and changing world where there is no time for doing good, if we go on procrastinating. "The city, the relatives, the children and the women are not as of yore. Leave off all thoughts of this life of household in the midst of wealth". (In *'nitiyil'*, *'il'* may be taken as the locative case-sign going with the noun *'niti'* or wealth. It may also be a word of negation, when the phrase will mean, life of household without any wealth. That will be inconsistent with the sixth verse which speaks of a royal life) (2).

II

"The exterior of the body or the skin becomes scaly and shrunken; the veins become palpable; the hairs turn gray; the words become trembling, weak and inaudible — when you become thus old, to think of doing Good or *Dharma* is indeed a heroic venture. But alas! it is impossible! If you realize this truth, pray, start at once without swerving even a little from this final resolve. This is the commerce befitting us now in the early morning of our life" (3). "Even if one commands all the armies with the elephants predominating, even if one rules with the seas as its limits on all the surrounding sides, one gets in the end reduced tapering down as it were and vanishing away like the tail of the *tadpole* appearing as attached to its head (even as the Sovereignty and Rulership appear as attached to the chieftainship). Therefore, feel no anxiety over these, my foolish mind" (6).

The fourth, the fifth, the seventh, the eighth and the ninth proceed on the fear of the crushing invincible *karma* and the hope of *redemption* through the Grace of God. "O, deceitful damsel of a

mind! Start at once with a clear conscience or certainty of being saved" (7). The same idea is repeated in the 9th verse: "If you ask one for a way out of the despair of the rare evils of old times and the sins for their destructions — destruction which is a rare sight — start at once without any more anxiety; we shall go to *Puṟampayam* to worship the Lord". The poet makes the distinction between *'tīmai'* (9) or evil and *'pāvam'* (9) or the sin probably as cause and effect. In these two verses, the poet is hopeful of redemption, the Grace of the Lord cutting the gordian knot of *karma* which otherwise seems to be inescapable. The inescapable aspect of this *karma* is referred in verses 4 and 7. "'The *karma* performed in the past comes and enshrouds us in the present in this very birth; before it enshrouds us that way, O, my foolish mind, start at once without confusing me any further; we shall go to worship at *Puṟampayam*" (7).

"'To beat one and rob him of his clothes conspiring murder for such robbery and inflicting pain on others — all these evil deeds committed come to produce their effects here in this birth — This is certain, O, my foolish mind! I have no other prop or support. Start at once without forgetting this. We shall go to worship at *Puṟampayam*" (4). Here, the *karma* appears to be terrifying though the poet is certain that Lord's Grace will save him.

In another verse, the poet gives a more hopeful and rosy picture. "Even in this very birth, all the fetters of *mala* will break away; even in our future birth, these cruel *karmas* will not come near us. Get rid of all your deception, malice and evil (*calam*). There is the city where resides our Creator of happiness (*Śaṅkaraṉ*). We shall go to worship at *Puṟampayam*" (8).

The last *hymn* expressed a fear and appealed to the Lord for His assurance and this *hymn* explains the nature of the fear as the anxiety of the ephemeral life and its miseries which are the effects of *karma,* leading into the ever ending wheel of *karma*. "I die and am born, and I become great — all this is a delusion where the bondage never ceases" (10). Afraid of all these, the poet thinks that he can escape from these by worshipping at *Puṟampayam*. In contemplation, he thinks of this truth of escape in his mind — a thought expressed in *Tamil* verse describing our father of *Tiruppuṟampayam*. "Fettered, our soaring spirit is imprisoned in this earth. When the fetter is removed the soul soars up to that Heaven of Purity capable of miracles." Those who could

recite this *hymn* without any pretensions are, therefore, sure to reach and rule in that Heaven (10).

III

The first verse should have also given expression to his disappointment with the present life. But on the other hand, it runs in a different strain. "I have recited or taught the *'aṅgas'*, the *śāstras*, subsidiary to the *Vēdas*. I started from *"Āraimēṟṟaḷi"* and came into *'Iṉṉampar'* and stayed there. The God has not chosen to explain things saying, "This is such and such. Therefore, my mind! start at once. We shall go and worship at *Puṟampayam"*. (1). From this, a story has been woven that he received no response from the Lord at *Iṉṉampar*, which made him to start to *Puṟampayam* in a sulky mood. This story should have become popular by the time of *Cēkkiḻār's Periyapurāṇam*. But the scheme of this *hymn* seems to suggest that *'Īcaṉār'* should have taken the place of some other word denoting the nearer relatives.

IV

This *hymn* is important as showing the kind of Royal life which our poet has led in the company of the chiefs in his days as is made clear by verse No. 6. The reference to the evil acts could not be any particular act in the present life of *Nampi Ārūrar* for he has assured the Lord that he has done nothing wrong.[1] From the experience of suffering, probably in a moment of despair he assumes that such acts were committed in the previous births, acts which he sees other chiefs committing before his eyes. We have already remarked that the poet, feeling for the whole world sometimes repents for the evils of others. In that way this *hymn* addressed to his mind may be taken to have been addressed to the chieftains round him.

V

The first verse in its very beginning is very significant, for therein, the poet tells us that he has studied and taught the *'aṅgas'*. The second verse will suggest that this *hymn* is a *hymn* of renunciation to be taken along with the *Malapāṭi hymn* in which case it must be as we have already suggested, a *hymn* sung at the fag end of his life. The second verse may mean, not only renunciation but also a revelation that this life should not be taken seriously though it need not be cast away. It must be also stated that this *hymn* is like the *Tiruttiṉai Nakar hymn* (No. 64) which is also

1. 7. 77: 5; 7: 95: 2,

emphasizing the ephemeral nature of the world and the hope of redemption. That apart, it looks as though that the poet had gone out for a research in these *aṅgas* to return through "*Āṟaimēṟṟaḷi*" and "*Iṉṉampar*". One wonders whether this study has kindled in him the feeling of renunciation so very patent in this *hymn*. Elsewhere also our poet has described himself as a great scholar.[2]

VI

The *Purāṇic* personality of the Lord is also referred to as inspiring hope in the mind of the poet. The crescent moon (2), the *Ganges* (2), the mat-lock (2), the bull (1, 4, 5), the serpent (4), His *Śivalōka* (5), His creation of happiness (8), the worship by the denizens of the Heavens after they had praised the minor deities (1), the denizens who praise Him and sing of the rare divine services and jump in joy to regain a firm foot-hold to dance once again (9). He is the *Īcaṉ* (Lord) (1), the father of our father (7), our Creator of happiness (8), our father (*Appaṉ*) (10), '*Bhūtanātaṉ*'—the Lord of the souls (3), that is how He appears to the poet.

The holy place to which he suggests his mind going on a pilgrimage, to be freed from all these miseries and fetters, is the beautiful heaven on earth, though our poet has no time to describe it at length. It is "*Celva-p puṟampayam*" (1), *the Puṟampayam* which is our wealth, where the fresh flowers of *mallikai* and *ceṇpakam* (2), bloom in joy in the night making the whole city fragrant, where the white and young sword-fish jumps and dashes into the fields (5), where on the lotus so very patent sleep the dotted crabs in joy (5). In all the sluices, the '*kaḻunīr*' flowers bloom (6) on all sides; nearby the sugar-cane is crushed to yield its honey which casts its fragrance all round the sweet smelling garden (6). The female swan is in a sulky mood displeased with the male swan and the sulkiness slowly disappears and they are happy in their union in that beautiful grove where the newly blooming '*puṉṉai*' smells sweet all along the water channel (7). The *Kāviri* rushes into the sea, where sail the ships and the holy waters of the *Kāviri* almost the waters of the purest *Ganges*, rush into all the fields to give the yield of gold (8). The natural tanks where blossom the white lotuses beautify that place (9). Therefore, this holy place is full of beauty, wealth, happiness and worship.

2, 7; 54; 10,

CHAPTER XXXI

TIRUKKŪṬALAIYĀRRŪR

(*Hymn* 85)

I

The poet has been advising his mind in the previous *hymn* to go to worship at *Puṟampayam,* for getting rid of the *karmas.* In the present *hymn,* the poet in the end assures us that the *karma*-bond of those who are masters of these ten verses of his, will break down (to let them free). This *hymn* refers to some of the *Purāṇic* stories of the Lord in the first line; describes the Mother in the second line; the holy place is referred to in the third line; the fouth line exclaims, "I had not known the astonishing supreme excellence of His going this way". The pattern of the sentence is, "The Lord of these acts had come this way with the Mother at *Kūṭalaiyāṟṟūr*—this astonishing supreme excellence I knew not or I had not known". What do these words mean?

II

These words have given rise to a story. From *Tiruppuṟampayam,* according to *Periyapurāṇam,* our poet started on a pilgrimage to *Tirumutukuṉṟam.* Whilst coming near *Kūṭalaiyāṟṟūr,* an old Brahmin appeared walking along the road when our poet inquired of him about the road leading to *Mutukuṉṟam* and He showed the road to *Kūṭalaiyāṟṟūr* only to disappear after a while. Our poet, it is said, realizing that it was the Lord who came as the Brahmin, gave expression to the astonishment in this *hymn* with the words, "I had not known this wonder of the Lord coming this way". There is nothing improbable in our poet believing and singing like this. But this *hymn* itself speaks of the Lord coming with the Mother and the ghosts. In the last verse, the poet summarizing his *hymn,* does not refer to this coming in of the Lord. The Lord has loved to dance with the damsel of the creeper waist in *Kūṭalaiyāṟṟur* (10). The poet describes this as an astonishing supreme excellence in his sweet *Tamil* of his quest and choice—that is what the poet himself vouchsafes to us. *Tirukkūṭalai-*

yāṟṟūr is a temple not sung by *Appar* or *Campantar* and therefore must have come into existence after their life-time. Our poet probably has not known of this temple and it must have been a happy surprise to find a temple there. "*Atiśayam*" does not mean wonder, for which the word is "*Aṟputam*". *Māṇikkavācakar* differentiates between '*Aticayam*' and '*Aṟputam*' — See his *Aticayappattu* and *Aṟputappattu.* *Aticayam* is the Supreme excellence. The Lord of no form and the Great Beyond comes down to save us and gets enshrined in any temple of our choice, even as a cultivator puts up a hut in his field to watch and save the paddy, growing in the field—an idea which we had emphasized earlier. He comes with a form of beauty and love in the idol (*Kōlamaturu*—9)—as an incarnation of beauty and love in the idol—the all Powerful, becoming thus as it were a toy in our hand to be moved and ordered about by us according to our sweet whims and fancies. Is that not this the supreme excellence of His love? This idea is there in relation to every temple but this becomes of compelling force when an unexpected temple is seen. It is because the aim of all these acts of God is to save us and free us from our fetters of *karma,* that the poet assures the readers of the *hymns* that they will be rid of their *kārmic* bondage.

III

The *purāṇic* stories have this message of the All Powerful coming to save us. His well-shaped white axe (1, 3), the elephant's skin (1), the company of the Mother (1-10), His following of ghosts, *Viṣṇu, Brahma, Indra, Vēdic* Scholars and denizens of Heaven and Earth (8), His begging with the skull (3), the beautiful river (4), the serpent and the moon in His mat-lock (7), His form of light (5), His *vīṇā* or harp of knowledge (6), the sacred ash (1), the sacred thread (6), the bull (9), the feast of poison (9), and His beautiful form (9) are all referred to. The Mother is specifically mentioned in every verse—*Umā* of the twisted and waving tresses of hair (1), the doll of waist looking like a creeper (10) of hood of the serpent (2) covered with nice silk (7), the damsel of the soft bosom tucked up with a ribbon (3), the lady of the beautiful fingers touching the ball in playing it (4), the Beauty of sweet-smelling teeth of pearls (6) and of crescent like forehead (8) adorned with ornaments (7),

IV

The Holy place is full of high towers, adorned with flags (1)—that is its beauty of art. Its natural beauty reminds us of cool refreshing love of God—its glorious gardens and groves full of tender leaves (7), bunches of flowers (4, 6), with the bees humming in search of their honey (5) blooming beautifully for being plucked up for adornment (2).

CHAPTER XXXII

TIRUMUTUKUNRAM

(*Hymn* 43)

I

The poet's heart sent the cry for God's help in the *Kaṟkuṭi hymn* and the *hymns* that followed. His confidence that God will save us all, had been well expressed. But how long are we to wait for His Grace though it is sure to come one day or other? "What, if some of the followers die here with their hearts melting in love for you?—they who lie in suspense hoping for your loving response and saving blessings, confidently asserting, "Your blessings will come to day; they will come tomorrow". "My Lord, if they die, pray, tell me what is to be done thereafter? For, at the time of their death, they will feel keenly their disappointment, though your blessings may come in their future birth" (1). "You are the Lord going about begging for the souls for blessing them all, going a-begging to their very doors" (3, 7, 8, 9). This idea seems to be behind the back of the poet's mind and he exclaims, "If you are going about showering your blessings on all, will an iota of it showered on these followers living in the hope of receiving your blessings, upset any scheme of yours? Is the quiver going to tear, if cotton is put in (as the proverb goes)? (1). Therefore, order your blessings". The idea seems to be that God is going about, begging for the souls, of all and sundry, whilst those who offer Him their all, are about to die in disappointment (1). In that way the whole *hymn* becomes a *Bhikṣāṭana hymn.* The reference to this *Bhikṣāṭana* form is clear in all the verses except 1 and 4, where the idea of the *Bhikṣāṭana* continues to be in the background as explained above. In the 4th verse, the poet sings, "You know no fatigue. (You wander at the doors of all without caring for those who are almost dying for you). What is there to be done in the future birth for those who praise you herein, in this birth? You must know this, you who had destroyed the life of the cruel Lord of Death, the Lord who had not known the consequences following from his act. (You had not

tarried a minute longer than what was necessary in saving *Mārkkaṇḍēya*. Why then procrastinate in helping these followers?)" (4).

In all the other verses, the references to *Bhikṣāṭana* form are direct. They look like the speeches of the beloved, feeling for the Lord going a-begging. "If you go wandering in all these villages will not they suffer—these rosy feet of yours like the golden lotus blossoming in the tank (2). (*Ēri* is the tank or reservoir which feeds the fields. Therefore, the tank full of water inspires the people lying north of the *Cōla* territory with hope and happiness, which is almost divine and, therefore, *Appar* describes *Śiva* as *Ēri niraintanaiya celvan*"[1] All these suggestions are implied in the descriptions of our poet also. "But You go about wandering, whilst your *toṇṭars* or servants stand singing and the denizens of heaven remain praising you. Is it fit and proper for you that you should go about thus begging from olden times?" (3).

"*(Why do you beg?* Your followers are almost dying and get nothing of it). Are all these things, which you had amassed, by singing, moving and dancing, along with your *aṭiyārs* at every door, for your consort *Umā?*" (5). "Is it fair that you should dance in the graveyard with your ears of ear-rings dashing against each other, in the company of the Damsel of subtle waist?" (6). "Is this a life worth living, life of going about begging for alms in the common yard of these women, whilst the cruel dogs bark when you go to their houses?" (7). "Is it fair that you and your *aṭiyārs* roaming about in the dusk at the cross-ways, should go for alms to every door?" (8). "Your Beloved, cooks for distributing in every village and is it fair that you should stand at every door for the paltry alms?" (9). "What will others say, if you wander about on all sides and receive the alms, pray, accept alms only from those who offer it in love" (10). Probably the poet is referring to the followers living in the hope of getting blessings from the Lord.

II

The poet here does not tell us that he is singing the dramatic speech of the damsels in love of the Lord as he had done in *Tiruppaiññīli hymn*. He calls this *hymn* the babblings of the mad slave of the Lord, referring to himself (11). Therefore, he

1. 6: 23: 5.

is not conscious in singing this *hymn* of the distinction between himself and the damsels. He becomes so identified with the beloved and speaks as the beloved. Are not the words of lovers sometimes called babblings? "The great philosophers and mystics who know no confusion and those of whatever kind of *tapas* they may be performing, if they praise the Lord of *Mutukuṉṟu* with this *hymn* they will experience the feeling of love of the beloved and they will become devoid of all their miseries and obstructions" (11). This is the assurance which the poet gives us who read this *hymn.*

III

The holy place inspires us with the memory of the story of *Bhikṣāṭana.* The wild elephant there gets into the *kheda,* set up for catching it. It is surrounded on all sides by the hunters. Starved, it cries in physical agony. The strong elephant, as a last effort, shakes off its laziness and roars, a roar which always resounds all through *Mutukuṉṟu* (2). The place is surrounded by the cruel people, the swordsmen and the bowmen keeping watch whilst the commotion of the sacrifice performed with the hands of munificence resound without ceasing all through *Mutukuṉṟu* (3). The palaces surrounded by fortress walls, the towers, the beautiful *maṇṭapas* and the groves, over which creep the clouds which completely cover it up, surround this holy place of *Mutukuṉṟu* (5). In the high peaks where grow the clouds, the must elephants roar, the *yāḷi* or lion residing in the caves also roars (as if in return). This sound of roars never ceases in *Mutukuṉṟu* (6). In the mountains, the lion kills and carries away the male elephant, whilst the female elephant pines in grief in the front yard of the houses of the mountain women (7). The she-monkey goes in search of fruits fit for eating for its he-monkey, worshipping first in that quest on the mountain slope, the feet of the Lord; and the mountain stands up, in all its glory before this loving monkey (8), even as the mountain does before the crowded followers falling at His feet. On all sides, its waves heave up and overflow—dashing against the banks, thus, the river *Muttāṟu* (river of pearls) kisses circumambulating the mountain (10).

NAMPI ENṞA TIRUPPATIKAM
(*Hymn* 63)

I

This is also a *hymn* of self-surrender but it breathes an air of happiness, the poet almost jumping at the idea which has taken deep roots in him that the Lord is the Prince, the saviour Prince, not only in this birth but in his seven-fold births (1-9). This is the refrain of the *hymn*: *"Eṉṉai āḷuṭai Nampi, eḻu piṟappum eṅkaḷ Nampi kaṇṭāyē"*—'Look! He is my saviour Prince! He is our Prince in all our sevenfold births'. As already explained, the various *purāṇic* stories which emphasize this truth are referred to as though reinforcing his faith and self-surrender. The Lord is the Prince of the sacred ash (1), the Prince of the *Vēdas* (1), the Prince of the sacred thread (3) (reporting thus all forms of purity and knowledge), the Prince of the red hue (1), and of the ruddy mat-lock (1), the Prince of the crescent moon on the crown wherein comes the serpent and wherein resides the maiden of the River (9), the Prince of the *Dēvas* starting with *Kumara* and the merciful eternal rulers of the extensive space (2) (representing thus all forms of Supremacy, the Beggar Prince unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (7), the Prince who feasted on the poison bestowing nectar on the *Dēvas* (3), the Prince sharing His form with the damsel (8) (representing thus all forms of Love), the Prince of the white axe (1), the Prince of the three eyes (1), the Prince who destroyed Death (4) and *Dakṣa's* sacrifice (6), the Prince who flayed the elephant's skin, (3), the Prince and destroyer of the three cities (5), (representing all forms of Power though representing Love). Here the poet makes a distinction between *'Amarar'* and *'Dēvar'* (2), the *Dēvas* being the denizens of Heaven, whilst the *Amarar* are as often interpreted by the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators as the freed or free souls.

II

There are certain philosophical ideas expressed about God. He is the Prince who becomes all time and space and the varied forms evolved out of them (6). He is the Prince who has made in

former times the crowd of worlds to become evolved and patent (7). He is the Prince of the past and the Prince of the future (7) (the poet is punning on the word '*pinnum*' which means both the future, and the twisted as referring to mat-lock), the Prince who rules together all this as a whole and the Prince who is the beginning and the end.

III

Coming to the religious aspect of the Lord, as usual, Jainism comes in for adverse criticism (9), not its true aspects but its false aspects, false probably in the way it had been practised by some of the age. However, he states that the Lord is the Prince, who has become this Jainism as well (9). If God is omnipotent, He must be everything, not only the good but also the bad. That is why our poet addresses Him as the Prince who is the fault or the evil (*Kuṟṟam Nampi* — 5). Truth is relative in essense and there must be some truth underlying any religion. It is, in that sense God the Prince, who has taken the form of *Jainism.* God is also the underlying principle of all religions which are so many ways of approaching Him. Therefore, our poet calls Him the Prince of *Religions* (*Camayaṅkaḷiṉ Nampi* — 6).

IV

Our poet gives expression to the experience of himself as a *Bhakta* (1). He is the Lord of beautiful loving eyes (2), of mercy unto all the souls born. He is the Prince who becomes great amongst the *Bhaktas* (2), He is the Prince of us all who bow down at His feet of refuge and praise Him as our father (2). He is the Prince who gushes forth as the fountain of nectar in the minds of *Bhaktas,* the Prince of all the souls whom He owns as His (4). He is the Prince who is enraged at the five senses that are not controlled (4). He is the Prince who blesses with the flood of Supreme Bliss (5). He is the Prince capable of blessing the *Bhaktas* and the Prince of those who suffer and feel miserable, because they cannot serve Him (8). Our poet exclaims why they thus end in misery after all their quest after pleasure. The Lord is the Prince who hides from those whose heart does not melt in love. He is the Prince who increases to those who melt in love, their bliss, herein, in this birth and hereafter in their next birth (10).

Our poet exclaims, "What can I do to you, O, Prince! who forces away all miserable sufferings which I, without any sense

of discrimination suffer, except singing you as the Prince showering a flood of Supreme bliss?" (5). "O, Prince! We shall ever be seeing your rosy feet, for, you are the Prince who accepts, this service of those who love and become one with you, accepts and blesses them by saving them and helping them to reach the greatest state of spiritual bliss" (9).

V

In this *hymn,* though it is stated to have been sung at *Tirumutukuṉṟam,* there is no reference to any place except *Tiruveḷḷaṭai* in the fourth verse. But, unfortunately, the last or the 10th verse has not reached us except for its first line and a portion of the second line. We are, therefore, unable to decide conclusively about the tradition that this *hymn* was sung with the intention of receiving 12,000 gold at the hands of the Lord. Perhaps the reliance is placed on the term *Nampi* or the Prince. We have already emphasized the importance of this word '*Nampi*' and its significance in explaining the import of the *hymn* No. 15 (*Tirunāṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi hymn*). This *hymn* is differentiated from the former *hymn* by the tone of its certain bliss. We can place this *hymn* also to the last part of our poet's life.

CHAPTER XXXIV

KŌYIL

Hymn 90

I

We had already seen the fear of death and the fear of hell helping our poet in inspiring in the minds of his readers a love for God about whose mercy the poet is confident.[1] In this *hymn* the poet almost jumps with joy at the discovery of this great treasure-trove, *i.e.*, the Lord of *Ciṟṟampalam.* This is the refrain of this *hymn* repeated at the end of every verse, "*puliyūrc-ciṟṟampalat-tem Perumāṉai-p peṟṟām aṉṟē*"—"This Lord will make us turn from the wrong path and thus help us to escape from the inflictions of the Lord of Death"—(inflictions which we have discussed elsewhere)—this idea also is repeated in every verse.

II

According to tradition, our poet saw God at *Citamparam* in the form in which the Lord danced at *Pērūr* on the banks of *Kāñci* in the western *Koṅku* country while he visited that place. This story we have considered in relation to the description of the form of dance in verse No. 10 herein. This, therefore, must have been sung after his visit to the *Koṅku* country which according to us took place only in the last part of his life. "*Maṭittāṭum aṭi*" (1), the bent foot may be taken as referring to the '*kuñcita pāda*' of the *kuñcita* dance so dear to the *Bhaktas,* which *Appar* has lovingly described as '*Iṉittam uṭaiya eṭutta poṟpātam*'.[2] *Aṭimai* generally means a slave probably as one always obediently lying at the feet. Here, it means service unto the Lord, by being in communion with His feet submerging our ego in the feet which dance.

The phrase '*Tatuttāṭkoḷvāṉ*' is repeated very many times in this *hymn* and we know that the title of that part of *Periya-*

1. 5:8; 8:6; 35:1-10; 60:7.
2. 4:81:4.

purāṅam giving us the story of *Ārūrar* has been given the name *'Taṭuttāṭkoṇṭa Purāṇam'* by *Cēkkiḻār*. *'Taṭuttāṭkoḷḷal' is a* phrase, therefore, very dear to *Nampi Ārūrar*, a phrase which the later day generations considered as giving us the very quintessence of his life history. It is a beautiful phrase expressing the mercy of the Lord as coming and preventing us from following our usual path of ignorance and misery and saving us through His loving Grace so that we may follow His path of love.

III

The poet describes in the form of advice to his own mind, the mercy of the Lord saving the erring souls. He is the Lord who will save us from the inflictions of the Lord of death not only when we are in His service but also all through our life, possibly because whatever the followers do becomes His act. He advises his mind to leave off that mad race for physical pleasures of this body enjoying those pleasures and roaming about everywhere. "We will not be in need of anything. Every day and for ever the Lord—that mad Dancer—will remove our sins" (6). "The Lord is in quest of us. Pray, therefore, do something good. He will ever save us from the inflictions of death" (9). "The hearts of us, *Bhaktas* (7) who think of Him as we ought to, not only melt as a stone will melt, but we also become perfect that we need nothing. O, mind! He will save us from the inflictions of death" (8)—thus he assures the mind.

In another verse he describes his own experience as that of mercy shown to the *Bhaktas* in general, thus rising that to a universal level instead of expressing his own subjective feelings. "Those who have incessantly followed the path of passions are away from Him, full of egoism. But once they turn away from that path, the egoism disappears. They fall at His feet before Him, ever thinking of Him, bearing no separation even for a moment, full of His most famous love. That is their great wealth; and them, the Lord saves. That is His greatness" (2). "Those who leave off the duplicity of their fox-like cunning (or those who leave off their characteristic feature of being identified with the body which after all becomes a kind of hiding place for the cunning fox) ever think of Him as the beloved of the Lord bearing no separation, going and falling before Him at His feet with their mind devoid of all egoism; and them, the Lord saves from the inflictions of Death" (3). "He cuts away the fetters of death,

giving the *Bhaktas* His own rare abode, and showering His never ending bliss" (4). "He rids the sins and *karmas* of those who contemplate on Him as His *Bhaktas*" (7).

IV

Our poet as usual refers to the *Purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord, of His dance (1), of his holding in his hand the drum (1), the fire (1) and the serpent (1), of the destruction of the Lord of Death (5), of the skin of the elephant (5), of His mat-lock (5), of His laurel of the crescent moon (5), of the destruction of the egoism of *Rāvaṇa* (7), of the company of the Mother (10) and of His bull (8). The poet also calls him '*Pērāḷar*' (2), 'The famous', '*Perumāṉ*' (5), 'The Great', '*Pittāṭi*', (6), 'The Mad Dancer,' '*Tampirāṉ*' (10), 'the Chief and the Patron', in loving terms which emphasize His greatness and love.

V

Here the poet does not describe the holy place except as "*Puliyūrc ciṟṟampalam*". In one place he describes the Lord as of the form well known to all as that worshipped by the three thousand (7), worshipped thrice without fail, every day. The three thousand are the three thousand Brahmins of *Citamparam* whom he had described in the very beginning of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* as '*Tillai vāḻ antaṇar*'. In his joy of discovery of the Lord as the treasure trove, he does not specifically mention any good following the recitation of this *hymn* other than this very joy.

VI

The last verse gives only the poet's name *Ārūrar*. This *hymn* is very important because herein he adumbrates the Divine Right theory of Kings (4); it is here that he speaks of the Lord creating *confusion amidst those who* fail to pay tribute to the *Pallava* king ruling the world. In commenting on *H.* 35, we had occasion to refer to the *poet's relationship with the* kings and chiefs of his age. Probably our poet *was a friend of the Pallava* king himself.

Part IV

WITH PARAVAI

Introduction

I

In this part are included the *hymns* on the temples of the *Cōḻa* country which, according to *Cēkkiḻār,* our poet visited whilst he was living with *Paravai* at *Tiruvārūr.* There is *hymn* No. 25 which specifically mentions *Tirumutukuṉṟam,* but which, *Cēkkiḻār* holds, was sung at *Tiruvārūr* for getting *from the tank there* the gold thrown into the river at *Tirumutukuṉṟam.* Those who may not believe in the supernatural, will prefer this *hymn* to have been sung at *Tirumutukuṉṟam.* In that case, we may group this along with the *hymns* of the first part where occurs the *Tirukkōḷili hymn* referring to *Paravai's* sufferings in the same way in which this *hymn* mentions her under straitened circumstances. This will make us assume that in that period our poet had been to *Tirumutukuṉṟam.*

II

The following are the exclamations which escape from the heart of our poet during this period: "When we contemplate with all our heart, Ah! how sweet is He!" (*H.* 30); "There is the temple, the place of the Lord of these acts" (*H.* 22); "What? Forget Him! Forgetting Him what shall I think of?" (*H.* 57); "I had a vision of the Lord and worshipped Him at *Kāṉāṭṭu muḷḷūr*" (*H.* 40); "Come along! Let us reach the temple of our Father at *Etirkoḷpāṭi*" (*H.* 7); "Would I have come to serve Him if I had known this, His wearing of serpent, *etc*". (*H.* 18); "Bless me, O, Lord! so that the miseries may be destroyed" (*H.* 25); "Is the Lord and Master of us all such and such? (*H.* 33); "Lord of *Naḷḷāṟu* is Nectar unto me, His slave; What else shall I think of, forgetting the Lord of *Naḷḷāṟu,* the Nectar?" (*H.* 68); "The Lord Supreme of *Kaṭavūr Mayāṉam* is such and such" (*H.* 53); "Ah, my Lord! my Nectar! Who is there as my companion except yourself"? (*H.* 28)); "*Valampuram* is the place of the Lord of these qualities and activities" (*H.* 72); "O, Lord of *Veṇkāṭu!* Why these con-

tradictory acts of yours?" (*H.* 6); "His favourite resort is *Naṉi-paḷḷi*" (*H.* 97); "I took refuge in your feet having heard of your blessing, insects and beasts and all" (*H.* 65); "*Tiruniṉṟiyūr* is the place of the Lord of such and such activities and characteristics" (*H.* 19); "Is it possible to get away from Him without falling at His feet?" (*H.* 56); "I had seen and experienced the Lord at *Kōlakkā*" (*H.* 62); "Are you not of this place *Kurukāvūr Veḷḷaṭai?*" (*H.* 29); "O, Lord of *Kaḻippālai!* Is it just, not to say, 'Ah!' even when I get puzzled?" (*H.* 23).

III

Worship through music, poetry and dance, keeping the three '*karaṇas*' pure and in His service, the *añcali* pose, *sahasranāma* or the thousand names of the Lord, worshipping with the eight flowers, festivals of drum and *pañcagavya*—are all mentioned. The worshippers are often divided into *Bhaktas* and *Siddhas.* *Toṇṭar* and *Aṭiyār* are also mentioned. *Toṇṭars* are referred to as playing on the drum. The followers of the Lord never get perturbed. Their birth is a hallowed one; for they are said to be the servants of the Lord for seven generations. He also refers to the surrender or subjection of the six passions. Our poet speaks of the community of *Bhaktas* as '*Aruṅkulam*'. These *Bhaktas* are as it were our masters and our leaders. Our poet falls at their feet, hankering after their mere physical presence. Our poet calls himself the '*Iḷaṅkiḷai*' or the youngest of the *Bhaktas.* Our poet mentions *Ñāṉa Campantar, Taṇṭi, Nāvukkaracar, Kaṇṇappar* and *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ.* We had already referred to our poet's conception that the South is the favourite place of the Lord and in this part he mentions the poets of the South as the great *Bhaktas.* Here also we find a mention of another colony of Brahmins at *Karuppaṟiyalūr,* the *Antaṇars* who bathe regularly, weave garlands of flowers for the Lord and worship Him according to the *Vēdic* path.

IV

Purāṇic stories are as usual described. The *Bhikṣāṭana* form, it is clear, is the great motif of our poet's art and we have interpreted very many of these *hymns* as *Bhikṣāṭana hymns.*

V

Nature attracts the attention of our poet and he gives us very many dynamic and dramatic pictures of Nature. Nature

offers her feast to all our five senses, but her beauty is not only material but moral and spiritual, as is revealed by the *Antaṇar* and women worshipping the Lord. Our poet is fond of describing the city or the places as attaining *Sārūpya* of *Śiva* by crowning itself with the crescent moon. The sea also is described. The rivers referred to in these *hymns* are *Maṇṇi* and *Koḷḷiṭam.*

VI

Here also our poet emphasizes the fact that God is impossible to be known. He is one who has to be experienced. The Lord is transcendental and immanent. He is like the sweet fragrance of the flower. That He is all kinds of relationship is once again emphasized. He is nearer to us in the incarnation of beauty in the temples than anywhere else. He is light, Love and Happiness. Our poet as usual is fond of the terms *Māsilāmaṇi* and *Māṇikkam,* emphasizing the *Jñāna* aspect of God as the Supreme value. He dispels darkness of the words and the subject matter. He is the Art. He is the Nectar and the Medicine. He is Time, the Past. *Dhārmic* aspect is also emphasized, for our Lord is called the *Dhārmic* ascetic; the teacher of the banyan tree blessing all, though Himself impossible to be known. In this connection, our poet's conception of the whole universe forming a happy family, a *gurukula,* with the Lord as the *Guru* may be referred to. He is our wealth running our errands through the saviour on our head. He is the Truth and the Pure, the deathless, the ageless, the sexless and the birthless. He is '*eṇguṇattāṉ*', a phrase which is found in *Tirukkuṟaḷ;* the '*aṣṭamūrta*' or eight forms are often mentioned. He is *Śambhu, Śaṅkara.* Our poet refers to the Lord also as *Gurumaṇi.* The Lord is sometimes identified with the followers as *Pattaṉ, Pācupataṉ* and *Caivaṉ.*

VII

Our poet in preaching to the world starts emphasizing the ephemeral nature of this world, its miseries, the fear of death and the waywardness of women. He assures that God will save us all from the miseries and *karmas,* however downfallen we may be. He refers to the chieftains riding on the elephants. He describes his shoulders as being hillock-like. He refers to His garland of lotus. He describes himself as the father of *Ciṅkaṭi* and *Vaṉappakai.* All these make it clear that these *hymns* belong to the period of his political influence and to the latter part of his married life when *Ciṅkaṭi* and *Vaṉappakai* should have become

spiritually great. There seems to have been some cloud cast over his political greatness. He speaks of the Lord saving him from the scandal.

VIII

The last verses of these *hymns* as usual speak of the ideal-relief from all miseries, extinguishment of *karma,* freedom from suffering night and day, destruction of sins inflicting us, immersion in divine bliss with no more death or entrance into the world, the bliss of *Paralōka, Śivalōka,* ruling *Vāṉulaku,* life in the heaven of bliss, the higher heavens of goodness and immense bliss dedicated to *Tapas,* reaching *Śivagati,* to be in communion with the Lord whilst worshipped by this world and the other, becoming leaders or the rulers of the world of the *Dēvas,* destruction of the delusion of the mind.

The *Vaiṣṇavites* refer to the spiritual state: *"Bhōdhayantah parasparam"*, 'where the Saints or the *Bhaktas* speak about the glories of the Lord to each other'. Our poet also speaks of becoming the worshippers of the Lord; he refers to the blabbering of the mad community of *Bhaktas,* repeating the *hymns* to the *Bhaktas* as a great ideal to be reached. They are sure of attaining salvation and, therefore, that tantamounts to *Śivagati.*

TIRUKKARUPPARIYALŪR

(*Hymn* 30)

I

This *hymn* gushes forth from the heart of the poet as a fountain of bliss. "When we contemplate with all our heart or mind on our Father (*Emmāṉ*) (1), our Lord (*Eṅkōṉ*) (9), our Chief (*Aiyaṉ*) (6), our Master and *Guru* (*Aṭikaḷ*) (7), Ah! how sweet is He"!—This is the refrain of the *hymn*. This contemplation of the mind on the Lord and its subjective experience are further described by the poet. "With an unconcerned pride of indifference to other temptations of the world closing the eyes and enshrining Him in our mind with an elation of the heart, when without going astray, we think or contemplate on Him, ah! how sweet is He!" (1). "He appears before them as everything and completely fills up the mind of those who shine with the form besmeared with the sacred ash; when we think of Him, ah! how sweet is He!" (2).

II

"Praising Him with the new garlands of words, when we contemplate on Him to get rid of darkness, ah! how sweet is He to us!" (4). This worship through poetry, music and dance, develops into a harmonious worship through poetry, music and dance. The thought of the chronic *karma*, still haunts him, but only to be got rid of by divine contemplation. "In order our never ending chronic *karma* may end and disappear when we sing his praises and dance in joy many a day, how sweet is He to be contemplated upon with all our heart!" (8). "Contemplating on Him for many a day singing and dancing to the soft tunes of sweet music, when we think of Him with all our mind, ah! how sweet is He to us!" (9). "It is the joy of the divine experience where disappear all the obstacles and miseries of *karma*, the joy of a poet and a musician in contemplation of God, serving and worshipping through poetry, music and dance, the God who stands as the eternal youth of beauty taking the very form of music and dance

and the guiding *tāḷa* keeping time" (3, 10). Our poet loves the Lord with all his heart and enjoys the resulting experience of divine bliss (1). Our poet gives expression to this bliss in what he calls these verses of fertile *Tamiḻ* (11). He assures us that this *Tamiḻ* will relieve, of all their miseries, the poets of the south full of all arts and the learned men, those who serve the Lord like our poet through their art and their learning (11).

III

Karuppaṟiyalūr is the name of the place, a city of escape from the womb or birth, which is really an escape from the *karma* and its obstacles and misery. *Karuppaṟiyal* is the weeding out of birth or the *karma* leading one into the womb. Campantar, in his *hymn* on this holy place, seems to equate these two ideas of *Karuppaṟiyal* and *Viṉaivāṭal* (the drying up of *karma* which forms the seed for the subsequent births). Our poet speaks of this extinguishment of *karma* as the destruction of miseries.

The Brahmin colonies of *Tillai* and *Vīḻi*, have already been referred to. There is probably another Brahmin colony at *Tirukkaruppaṟiyalūr* following the *Śaivite* path probably attached to the temple therein, without leaving off their old *Vēdic* path of their Sacrificial fire (6). "The Brahmins of *Tillai*", our poet told us, "worship the Lord thrice a day without any obstruction or break".[1] "So do the Brahmins of *Tirukkaruppaṟiyalūr*, the *Antaṇar*, the Righteous of the beautiful and the cool loving qualities, without break, every day bathe in the holy waters, gather flowers direct from the trees, weave garlands of flowers and offer them at His feet thrice a day" (3). "*Karuppaṟiyalūr* is theirs. With their unfailing truth, they besmear themselves with the sacred ash, praise Him, perform the *pūja*, or ceremonial worship of the sacred fire" (6). "There, *Vēdic* scholars of no want, always reciting the *Vēdas*, unceasingly perform all the services unto the Lord including all menial acts" (8).

The bliss of his experience in the midst of the *Bhaktas* inclusive of the Brahmins of the place, makes him see beauty and joy everywhere in that holy place. Though the temple and the city, used to be referred by the name of the city, we have various temples of *Nampi Ārūrar's* time having specific names as distinguished

1. 7:90:7.

from the names of the cities. Here, the city was known as *Karup-parịyalūr* whilst the temple was famous as *Kokuṭikkōyil,* the temple of jasmine, the *kokuṭi* being a variety of jasmine or *mullai,* because it is the holy plant of that temple. This holiness of the beautiful jasmine plant inspires our poet to see the same holiness and beauty everywhere in and around that place. There is the mango grove full of flowers where the *cuckoos* sing and the peacocks dance (1). The same idea is repeated in verse No. 6, but this time, it is a flower garden rather than a mango grove, where both the *cuckoo* and the peacock send up their resonating voice. (According to one reading in both the places 1 and 6, the sound alone is referred to though it must be stated that '*ālum*' as referring to the peacock may mean both the sound and the dance). In the fences of these gardens, the red fruits or the well ripe fruits of the black trunked plantain shower their honeyed juice (4), the garden and the groves full of sweet fragrance let fall their fruits all round (9). There is the joyful flower garden of arecanut palms, cooling to the eyes of the sight seers (10), the flower garden overflowing with the honeyed juice of the cocoanut palm, rich with the bunches of cocoanut (11). In this natural pond of lotus, casting its fragrance all round, frisk about the carps and the '*vāḷai*' fish, whilst the varieties of cool bees climb up the creepers and hum their tunes (5). This is a dynamic picture of the activity of nature. There is also the static Absolute, reflected in the picture of the quiet peace of Nature. In the fragrant pond, the dark buffaloes sleep in peace (7). No wonder the Lord in the midst of this natural surrounding appears as the beautiful youth (*kuḻakaṉ*) (3).

IV

We have in this *hymn* as well, various references to the *purāṇic* descriptions — the flaying of the elephant's skin (1), the fright of the Mother (1), Her loving company (2), the destruction of Death (2), the bull (2), the sacred ash (5), the ribbon of a serpent (5), the mat-lock and the *Ganges* (9), the victorious anklet (5), the battle axe (11), the eight arms (8), the three eyes (8), the blue throat (8) and His unknowability to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (9).

V

Certain terms of philosophical implication used by our poet are worth noting. The Lord is everything, the air, the fire, the sun and the moon (2). He is the very form of the fine arts (3). He

assumes the eight forms (3). The references to the religious worship have already been given above. This is one of the few *hymns* where our poet makes reference to the *Buddhists* and the Jains. (10). The obstinate Jains and the Buddhists are here accused as spreading scandals about the Lord — their usual criticism of *Śaivism* (10).

This *hymn* gives us a picture of the poet as a poet, musician and dancer, serving the Lord through these arts, his consequent experience of His bliss and his concern for his colleagues (11). He describes himself as the father of *Vaṉappakai, as one with hillock-like* shoulders (11). This *hymn* must, therefore, belong to the period subsequent to his marriage when he was enjoying the company of the chiefs of his age and being proud of his shoulders and his physical prowess though all in the service of God.

CHAPTER XXXVI

TIRUPPAḺAMAṈṆIPPAṬIKKARAI

(*Hymn* 22)

I

The poet in the company of *Bhaktas,* comes to the temple of *Tiruppaḻamaṉṇippaṭikkarai,* the temple on the bank of the old river *Maṉṇi,* branching off from the *Coleroon.* The mercy of the Lord involved in enshrining Himself there, inspires him with joy and love. He points out the temple to the *Bhaktas* (3). "There is the temple," he points out, "the place of the Lord who has come to save us here and now" and he begins to describe Him in various ways. In verses 3, 5 and 9 the address to the *Bhaktas* is clear. But as we always find a uniformity in each one of his *hymns,* the other verses of this *hymn* may also be understood as being addressed to the *Bhaktas.* The pattern of the sentence, "Ah! this *Paḻamaṉṇippaṭikkarai* is the place of the Lord of these acts!" is quite clear in verses 2 and 5. But in other verses, the same pattern may be understood, though, as they stand, they mean, "Ah, this is *Paḻamaṉṇippaṭikkarai* of this Lord of these activities!" Thus the emphasis is placed on *Paḻamaṉṇippaṭikkarai* where the Lord has come to stay to save us, like the cultivator putting up a hut in his field. The poet himself in his last verse speaks of this *hymn* as one in praise of *Paḻamaṉṇippaṭikkarai.* Even the sands trodden on by the beloved one is dear to the lover when the Love reaches its zenith. Our poet as the beloved of the Lord falls in love with His holy place (3).

II

Thus the descriptions of the place are only in relation to the Lord coming and enshrining Himself there and our poet almost dances in joy in enumerating the acts of the Lord. "This is the *Paḻamaṉṇippaṭikkarai* of clear waters where live happily innumerable lives which may ordinarily refer to the creatures of the water but which in the present context should refer to the innumerable human beings saved by the Lord through His kind act of establishing Himself within that temple in our midst" (10). "He is the

Past. He is our Lord and Patron, the Great Saviour and Guide" (1). The word *Pirāṉ* is interpreted by the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators as *'upakārakaṉ'*, the Great Help, and this word is repeated six times with an inward joy in the first verse. "He is the recessive past; He is the Saviour whose beginning nobody can see or know; He is the Saviour on our crown, the Eternal Saviour. He is the Saviour and the Great Teacher of the banyan tree ready to swallow poison for us" (1). "The crown of His head is the dome of the Heavens but yet He stands firm for ever at *Paḻamaṇṇippaṭikkarai*, to enable His *Bhaktas* to praise and worship Him and serve under His feet of our refuge, showering flowers thereon" (2). "Ye, who are full of love! Oh, Ye, who dance in joy and love! Ye, who serve Him surrounded by our people and your people! Adorn yourself with the dust of the feet of His followers. This is a lightning-like ephemeral life of suffering and decay. But without undergoing these miseries of life, reform yourself and walk along; Oh, *Bhaktas*, sing His *Paḻamaṇṇippaṭikkarai*" (3). "Hark, this is *Paḻamaṇṇippaṭikkarai* of the Lord of Power" (4). "Oh, you have dedicated yourselves to the service of the Lord; feel elated in praising and worshipping Him with your hands held in *añcali* pose. Hark! this is *Paḻamaṇṇippaṭikkarai*" (5). "The Lord showers His blessings pleased with the song and music even of the erring souls" (7). "The Lord is unknown to the great men of power even when they worship Him with the eight flowers" (8). "Do not think of Him as a mad man" (9). "He is attached to the *Paḻamaṇṇippaṭikkarai*" to save us; get, therefore, attached to Him (the *Paḻamaṇṇipaṭikkarai* Lord) and get rid of all your sins and infamy" (9). Thus singing and experiencing the joy of his own *hymn*, he assures the readers that they will also be rid of their miseries (10).

III

The *poet is referring to the details* of worship with the three *karaṇas* (5). The *añjali* pose is referred to as *"kai kūppal"*. The Lord Saviour on our head is familiar to the students of *Pallava* inscription as already pointed out by us. The feet of the Lord are important as our refuge and falling at His feet is an expression of our self-surrender. The worship of the feet of the Lord has become popular in *Buddhism* of the age of *Maṇimēkalai*. The worship of *Viṣṇupāda* or the feet of *Viṣṇu* is also well known. *Śiva's* feet standing merely as such without any other image were also thus worshipped in the *Pallava* Age as is made clear by the Icono-

graphy of the Eastern Archipelago. The famous verses of *Appar* ending in "*Aiyāraṉ aṭittalamē*"[1] should be referring to such worship of the foot-prints considered to be those of *Śiva*. *Paṅkaya-pādam* (5) is a term familiar to the readers of *Maṇimēkalai* and our poet speaks of the Lord in almost similar terms '*Paṅkaya-pādaṉ*' (5).

The worship with flowers and garlands has been often referred to in these *hymns*. Here, our poet refers to the eight flowers (*puṉṉai*, white *erukku*, *caṉpakam*, *nantiyāvarttam*, *nīlōtpalam*, *pātiri*, *alari* and the red lotus) — these are the external flowers (8). There are also eight mental qualities spoken of as flowers used in mental or spiritual worship; *viz.*, non-violence, control of the senses, forbearance, mercy, knowledge, truth, *tapas* or sacrifice and love. The worship of the temple goes along with the worship of the form of the Lord as the Universe where the dome of the Heaven becomes His crown (2). The importance of music and dance and poetry in worship is also well brought out in this *hymn* (3).

The followers of the Lord renouncing every thing, are clothed in loin cloth stitched up with the waist-string (9) to show that they have cut themselves away from all attachments and the experiences of the sensuous enjoyment of this world. The *Kuṟaḷ*, "*Paṟṟuka Paṟṟaṟṟāṉ paṟṟiṉai appaṟṟai-p paṟṟuka paṟṟu viṭaṟku*" seems to be echoed in the 9th verse of this *hymn*.

Our poet often differentiates between *Pattar* (3), and *Cittar*, the loving souls on their way to be freed and the free souls. Perhaps, there is a pun on the former word, *viz.*, *Baddha* and *Bhakta*. In this *hymn* our poet differentiates further amongst the souls on their way to freedom into *Bhaktas*, *Toṇṭars* and *Aṉpars* (3). The *Bhaktas* sing, the *Aṉpars* or lovers dance in ecstasy and *toṇṭars* serve His Followers. This is a distinction corresponding to *Pēy*, *Pūtam* and *Pāriṭam* surrounding the Divine Dancer and also corresponding to the "*Pattarāyp paṇivārkaḷ ellārkkum aṭiyēṉ*, *paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār aṭiyarkkum aṭiyēṉ*, *Cittattaic Civaṉpālē Vaittārkkum aṭiyēṉ*[2] which our poet enumerates in his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* though the word *Pattar* is used there in a different meaning. The word '*Pācupataṉ*' as the

1. 4:92.
2. 7:39:10.

name of the Lord is repeated twice (6, 8), a word which is to be distinguished from *Paśupati*. *Pācupataṉ* is a follower of *Paśupati*, though not necessarily the follower of the *Pāśupata* sect. In a similar manner our poet sings of *Śiva* as '*Śaivaṉ*' a follower of *Śiva*. That these references identify the followers as *Śiva* Himself is the corner-stone of His faith as revealed in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*. *Pācupataṉ* may also mean *Śiva* as in possession of his special weapon known as *Pāśupatam*, the *Pāsupatāśtra*, the missile, presided over by *Paśupati* or *Śiva* which He has bestowed on *Arjuna*.

IV

The *Purāṇic* descriptions as well are referred to as emphasizing the message of his *hymn*: the blue throat (1), the sacred ash (7), the crescent moon (2), the company of the Mother (5), the Lord of the *Dēvas* (8), receiving the worship of *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* (8) to whom the Great remains invisible, the Great teacher of the banyan tree (1), the destroyer of the three cities (8) and Death (6), carrying the white axe (5), the trident (5), the Destroyer and Saviour of *Rāvaṇa* (7), of the red like coral form adorned with the anklet of victory (6), the great master of the white dance (2).

V

The *Jains* are specifically mentioned and the '*um*' (and) of '*Amaṇum*' probably suggests that our poet is impliedly referring to *Buddhists* as well (9). "Our Lord departs in no haste from them to enjoy the feast of poison" (9)—thus our poet sings, probably implying that our Lord swallows also their sins, and scandals also, to save them by giving them nectar or redemption. Their condemnation of the Lord as the mad man (9), our poet begs of us not to believe. The *Jains*—evidently the *Digambara* ascetics—are described by our poet as being very learned but going about naked (9). This verse is however interpreted in another way; The departure is taken as referring to the followers of the Lord to whom this verse is addressed—the followers who wear the stitched up cloth piece (a contrast to the naked *amaṇas*) for cutting away or escaping from eating (as referring to this birth where the only important activity seems to be eating and nourishing this body or as referring to experiencing the fruits of *karma*); they are asked not to go in haste to the naked but learned *Camaṇ* or *Jains* (*Kaṟṟa* + *amaṉ* has become *Kaṟṟamaṉ*, consequent on the ellipsis of the final '*a*' of *Kaṟṟa*); next, they are requested to

tear themselves away from the *amaṉ;* they are told not to think of the Lord swallowing the poison and riding on the bull as a mad person; for these show his Grace and *Dharma;* they are finally advised to get themselves attached to the Lord attached to *Paḻamaṇṇippaṭikkarai* and to get rid of their scandals and sins thereby.

VI

This *hymn* also must belong to the period of our poet's political greatness. He describes himself as the *Ārūraṉ* of the garland of lotus (10); the lotus garland is peculiar to the Brahmins[3] and, therefore, he must be conscious of His birth. He is thinking of his followers and relatives. He assures those who are capable of reciting this *hymn* or listening to it, that their followers and relatives also will be relieved of all their sufferings all through the day both during day and night—an assurance which reminds us of the later day '*kavaca*' *hymns* in Sanskrit (10).

3. *Kali:* V., 52.

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CHAPTER XXXVII

TIRUVĀḺKOḶIPUTTŪR

(*Hymn* 57)

I

The bliss as experienced and expressed in the previous *hymn* must have been so unwordly that somewhere from the unconscious, a doubt should have reasonably sprung whether this blessing of the Lord will be continuous, thus suggesting, as the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators would say, a game of hide and seek, played by the Lord. The world as it stands makes most of us forget the Lord. "Will I also forget"?—thus arises a doubt, but his own mind, which has experienced the supreme bliss crying out in joy, "How sweet is He when we think of Him"! and pointing out the temple where He has enshrined Himself, now exclaims, "What Forget Him! Forgetting Him, what shall I think of?"—that is the refrain of the present *hymn*.

Our mind is so constituted that when one thought occupies its centre, other thoughts fade away to be forgotten. It is the nature of the mind also to hold on the happy thoughts. The Lord has become everything to our poet. His omnipresence is no more a theory but our poet's own personal experience, an experience of what the *Upaniṣads* speak of as, "*Satyam, Jñānam* and *Anantam Brahmam*". If everything brings our happy Lord before our poet, how can he forget Him and what else will he think of? The chorus of this *hymn*, thus reveals to us the great state reached by our poet in his spiritual experience.

II

The Lord is to our poet the most precious thing—(1-12) *māṇikkam'*, the precious gem of carbuncle, the lovely and lovable *māṇikkam* our poet is very fond of. He is repeating this description many a time in his *hymns* as one who has moved in the company of Emperors and himself wielding political influence. *Māṇikkam* representing the beauty, nature and all, appeals to him as reflecting in its lustre, the Lord of invaluable light and law.

Māṇikkam is sometimes spoken of as the gem on the crest of a cobra. This has probably suggested the *purāṇic* story of an ant-hill residence of a cobra, where was hidden the sword of *Arjuna* by the Lord. *Vāḷoḷipuṟṟūr* is one form of the name of the city. The other form is *Vāḷkoḷip puttūr*. *Puttūr* is a new city; to distinguish it from other *Puttūrs* it was called *Vāḷkoḷi* or *Vāḷoḷi*. But his love is in addition pure and holy and, therefore, he loves calling God *'Puṉitaṉ'* (11).

III

He gives expression to the experience of the Lord. "He is the one who gives Himself up to me for being contemplated on. Thanks to His universal sovereignty, I am His slave and dog" (1). "He is the one who removes all the anxieties and the confusions of the mind. He is never displeased with my word and he has come and enshrined Himself in my heart" (3). "He has come and embraced me as the great hunter going after *Arjuna*" (6). "He is my father, the munificent patron of my father's father" (7). His experience of the Lord as we found elsewhere is expressed as the universal experience of the followers of the Lord. "The Lord jumps into the mind of those who contemplate on Him and completely fills it up" (2). "He is the greatest expert of making those who worship Him with flowers in their hands to reach His feet" (4), "One who is capable of removing all the obstacles", (7) "and all the defects" (8). "He is the great nectar and the medicine to all the loving things" (10). "He is the truth, becoming false unto all those who are devoid of truth, who is also the one who experiences everything standing even in this very body" (11). That this *hymn* also is one of bliss where are destroyed the sins already committed, is made clear by our poet assuring its readers that "this, a *hymn* of *Tamiḻ* of the cool heart—a heart whose heat of mad activity and passion had cooled down, a *hymn,* of good effects clear to our eyes, which destroys their sins which they have committed and which come to inflict them" (12). The *'Uḷaṅkuḷir Tamiḻ'* (12) is reminiscent of *Campantar's* assertion, *"Uḷaṅkuḷirnta pōtelām ukantukantu uraippaṉē"*.[1] "I sing of him whenever my heart is cool and happy". It is in the same mood, our poet also has sung this *hymn.* Our poet speaks lovingly of this *hymn* as a creation of his, as much of a child as *Ciṅkaṭi.*

1. *Cam:* 2:98:9.

The Lord is the *Dēva* of the *Dēvas,* God of Gods, (3)—the Lord of the *Dēvas* unknown to them (6). He is one whose beginning has never been seen or known, the greatest among the ancient three, the one great principle impossible to be known (7), but one who, however, out of His Grace assumes a form for our sake (6), the red one smeared with white ashes (11). He is of that country of empty space or Heavens—*Vāṉanāṭaṉ* (8).

IV

These names lead us on to a consideration of *Purāṇic* references which are found in this *hymn* as in others. The destruction of the elephant (1, 4), and the Lord of Death (1), and the three cities (5), the begging with the skull (4), the riding on the bull (1), the sacred ash (11), the serpent (4), the garland of bone and the sacred thread on his chest (5), the singing of the four *Vēdas* (10), carrying a hand-bag of sacred ashes (10), vanquishing and blessing *Rāvaṇa* (9) and *Arjuṇa* (6), remaining invisible to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8). The poet speaks of the Lord as going a-begging as a lover whilst He Himself has burnt to ashes *Maṉmata* (2,5). Again he speaks of the Lord being in the company of the damsel after having destroyed *Kāma* (5). This oxymoron suggests that one should be a Lord and not a slave of love and that there is nothing carnal about Lord's love. These *purāṇic* references are looked upon by our poet as something related to his own subjective experience and not as mere stories. He speaks of the Hunter going to fight with *Arjuna* coming and being with him (6).

V

In this *hymn* also our poet refers to the *Jains* and *Buddhists* almost in the very terms in which *Campantar* refers to them in one place "*Iruntuṇ Tērar* and *niṉṟuṇ camaṇ*"[2] — "The Buddhists sit and eat whilst the Jains and the ascetics stand and eat" (10). The *Buddhists* are called the *Tērar* and *Cēkkiḻār* in describing the debate between the *Buddhists* and *Campantar* because of this, gives at length the principles of *Tēravāda Buddhism.* Our poet's complaint against these sectarians is that they make fun of the Lord who in spite of it stands firm unperturbed and unaffected by them.

2. *Cam:* 1:98:10.

VI

Our poet as usual describes the holy place as befitting the mood of the poem. The Lord is on the banks of the cool waters of *Maṇṇi*, where the blue lilies bloom in the small sluices (2), the river *Maṇṇi*, which comes and flows down into this place with happiness, carrying the tusk of the elephant, the black *akil* and the *chauries* (7). The place abounds with dramatic scenes of nature. The ripe cocoanut falls down; the buffaloes of ruddy eyes lying peacefully in the muddy waters of the fields, get terrified and run helter skelter, making the fields thus ready for cultivation (9). The '*vāḷai*' fish in its turn gets frightened and leaps up, to escape being crushed by the buffalo (9). The groves there glisten with the fertility and rich yield, while the fields are full of the best paddy of astonishing good yield (1).

VII

This *hymn* also must have been written in the period of his political influence. He calls himself "*Vaṉṟoṇṭaṉ*", son of *Caṭaiyaṉ*, father of *Vaṉappakai* and *Ciṅkaṭi*, the king of the people of *Nāvalūr* (12).

CHAPTER XXXVIII

TIRUKKĀNAṬṬUMUḶḶŪR

(*Hymn* 40)

I

In the previous *hymn*, when the poet sang, "What else shall I think, forgetting you?", it was suggested that it was because that everything appeared to the poet as the Lord that he could not think of anything else forgetting the Lord. In this *hymn*, this idea which was in the background comes to the forefront and he describes this universal vision in this *hymn*. According to *Periyapurāṇam*, the Lord appeared before our poet when the latter was approaching *Kāṉaṭṭumuḷḷūr* and that it was his vision that the poet was singing in this *hymn*.

II

Of course our poet identifies this universal vision with the form of *Śiva* described in the *Purāṇas* which he was cherishing in his heart as a form of beauty and love. This identification is not a mere intellectual affirmation but an expression of his experience of the identity.

In the first verse he sees the Lord as *Śiva, Indra, Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* — all sung in the *Vēdas* — and, therefore, as the great Lord of the *Vēdas* and the great speech of truth. In the second verse he identifies his *Śiva* of twisted mat-lock as that principle of the universe becoming the whole world, the movable and the immovable lives therein, becoming the aeons and that sea (which floods the world at the end of each aeon) and the five basic elements evolving into various beautiful forms. He has become one great mass of basic cloud. He has become all this, out of His pure Grace like unto the cloud showering its rains expecting nothing in return. In the third verse he identifies the *purāṇic* form of *Śiva* with the all pervasive Lord of the *Vēdas* (*Puruṣa Sūkta*), the great light of lights and with the Lord of the *Āgamas* possessed of the eight great qualities.[1]

1. See *Parimēlaḻakar—Eṇguṇattāṉ—Tirukkuṟaḷ*—8.

In the fourth, he identifies the *purāṇic* form of *Śiva* with that supreme principle of ours beyond everything, becoming all the contradictory things of the Universe like fire and water, becoming in fine, all matter being Himself the five elements, becoming the great category of time, being Himself the future, the present and the past and becoming the great category of space and all that move through this space measuring time like the sun and the moon. In the fifth verse he identifies the *purāṇic* form of *Śiva* the crest jewel of the *Dēvas* (*Dēvarkaḷ cūḷāmaṇi*) as the great witness and *Sākṣin*, becoming at the same time all this universe — the great immanent and transcendent principle. In the sixth verse he identifies *Śiva* of the *purāṇas* beyond the reach of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* as the only truth or principle of this world, that one principle which creates our happiness and bliss. The seventh verse lays the emphasis on this principle of Light, Love and Happiness which is important in a pragmatic point of view. The Lord of the *Dēvas*, the Lord of the eternal beings and the secret principle of the *Vēdas* is identified with this Principle of Light and Happiness which our souls hanker after. He is the rare gem, the pearl, the divine gem, the honey and the juice of the sweet sugarcane, the great precious stone beyond knowledge, and the shining gold.

III

In connection with these descriptions our poet also mentions the Lord as enjoying the bath in the five-fold fruits of the cow, (7), the milk, the curd, the ghee, the dung and the urine — all coming out of the green grass the cow eats, undergoing a miraculous metamorphosis into the wonderful food and constituents of food mixed in the right proportion for the calf and the human beings, *viz.,* milk as a mixture of protein, carbohydrate, fat and water in its natural form, curd as more digestible, thanks to the work of the lactic acid — giving us the most important protein, and ghee representing the fat constituent and the food or manure, the cow-dung and urine, for the plants whch had given the cow its sustenance — a wonderful play of the co-operative principle forming or expressing the beautiful circle of the plants and animals feeding and nourishing one another. Our poet distinguishes the first three from the rest and mentions only these three in some places.[2] The Lord of the divine principle is sent to shine at every

2. 7:15:6.

point of this five-fold metamorphosis, the five great wonders of the organism of the cow and it is this which is spoken of as the bath in the five-fold fruits of the cow.

IV

In the eighth verse, our poet describes the great dance of the Absolute standing all alone after everything has been involved into itself throwing out its eight arms, representing the eight points of the compass, dancing in the great fire of sacrifice as an eternal youth with no attachment whatever. The universal vision is thus given a concrete expression in this description. The ninth verse identifies the *Śiva* of the *Purāṇas* dear to his heart as the great Lord who takes all the varied things of this universe as His own form. The tenth verse represents the harmony of Light and Love in the form of *Ardhanārīśvara* and suggests that this first principle of the *Vēdas* assumes these forms of the universe for showering on us its love so that we may not get ourselves entangled in the mire of a cruel hell. In the last verse the crown of the Lord saving the crescent moon and the feet of the Lord blessing *Rāvaṇa* are referred to, suggesting thereby He is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of everything.

V

The references to the *purāṇic* descriptions also come in this *hymn* — the crescent moon (1, 3, 9, 11), the mat-lock (1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11), the trident (3), the *koṉṟai* (4), the bull (3, 5), the serpent (5), the form red like the flower of *"murukku"* (5), the flag of the bull and the serpent (6),[3] — the sacred thread (8), the eight shoulders (8), the fire dance (8), the loin cloth (8), the ear-ring (8, 9), the milk-like sacred ash (9), the company of the Mother (10), the indivisible form of His (10) and the redemption of *Rāvaṇa* (11).

VI

The beauty of the holy place must have appealed to our poet in the present context as the very form of the beauty of this great Lord, constituting this wonderful universal vision. It is a vision of happiness and love. The bent up bud of (*tāḻai*) with its thorny

3. See our discussion on *Kaṭṭuvāṅkam*.

outer leaves blossoms forth becoming more and more fragrant and the grove overflows with its sweet smell. In the fields surrounded by these groves the blue *kuvaḷai* with the honey in its mouth sleeps undisturbed (1).

There is another vision of happiness, a miracle as it were worked by water suggesting overflowing Grace of the Lord. The buds of lotuses raise their heads high up above the water and blossom into flowers of greatness. The swans get on these commodious flowers and play. Near the wide banks of the pond, the sugar-canes grow taller and taller whilst the great paddy plants grow crowding together (3). The excellent paddy grows cool with great blades. Nearby stand the soft sugarcanes of pearls and bend low on the moat. On the bamboos grown there on the moat, the bees build their honey comb. Such fertile fields surround these holy places (8).

There is the play of the fish to the concert of bees. The cranes and storks rush and cry in joy at getting their feast of fish. The carps and other small fish oblivious and unconcerned glide glistening and frisking about in play. In the water lilies, the bees sing as though for this play (10). The green arecanut palms stand all around where the cocoanut palm overflows with its intoxicating rich honeyed juice. The youthful bees drinking this juice sing in joy whilst the peacocks dance in the groves (4).

The river *Koḷḷiṭam—Coleroon*—beautifies the place. The damsels bathe in the river with their garments, their tresses of hair and garlands loosening down. The *kuṅkumam* paste washed in the river piles up and the river rushes along pushing it forth; on the banks of this river in the fields, the work-women remove the long '*kuvaḷai*' flowers with their overflow of honey, as heaps of weeds (6).

The river allows the gems of good hue to settle down on the banks. The flood rushes, forming whirls on its downward march (7). The flood comes with foams which leave their mark on the banks (11). Heading against its waves the damsels of beautiful bangles dive down and bathe in this river on whose banks as though in joy of all these the blue lily blossoms like the blue sapphire (7). (The reading adopted is "*Nuraiyiṉār karai taḻuvu Koḷḷiṭattiṉ karai*' (11) which is better than the other reading though there is no alliteration; this want is made up with assonance).

The damsels representing love thus beautify the place of holiness. The harmony of all kinds of life is suggested in another verse. In the moat sleeps peacefully the pure blue water lily lovingly taken care of by beautiful damsels of lips red like the '*toṇṭai fruit*' whose words are sweet and pure even when they are sulky. Near these water lilies stands the garden of plantains sweet with the ripe fruits, embracing the flower grove (9).

This beauty of nature rich with the palmyra palms and cocoanut garden is further heightened by the moral beauty of the righteous '*antaṇar*' singing *Vēdas*, performing everywhere all through their seven births the *Vēdic* sacrifices distributing immense treasure all through this holy city of Muḷḷūr (5). These Brahmins are blessed with the wealth beloved of '*Tiru*' or the Goddess of Wealth. They kindle the three sacred fires, these beautiful '*antaṇars*' of all propriety. Their recitation all through the city is as much a sign of beauty of the place as the black buffalo going about grazing the lotuses in the fields thus unwittingly weeding out the obstacles to the growth of paddy (2).

VII

This *hymn* should also belong to the age of his political greatness for he describes himself, "*Uraiyiṉār matayāṉai Nāvalārūraṉ*", the famous *Arūraṉ* of *Nāval* riding on an elephant (11). Or, '*matayāṉai*' may be a metaphorical description of *Ārūrar*. But he is also referring to his great attachment to the Lord and refers to the glorious *Tamiḻ* expressed as a matter of right in relation to his relationship with the Lord. He assures that those who are masters of this *hymn* will become the leaders of those who rule this world, divided into so many countries by the mountains and that they will also go a-head and become the leaders of the *Dēvas* to stand firmly established for ever as such leaders. The universal wisdom suggests universal sovereignty because in this vision our poet is thoroughly immersed in the Lord. That he should speak of this divine bliss in terms of universal sovereignty suggests that it is his pre-occupation of the kingdoms and rulers of his day that has driven the poet to express himself in this vein (11).

CHAPTER XXXIX

TIRU ETIRKOḶPĀṬI

(*Hymn* 7)

I

In the last *hymn*, our poet sang of the universal vision, assuring the readers of the *hymn* that they would rule this world and the other. The assurance took that form, because the world before him was hankering after such rulership and the pleasures which that rulership brought in its train. The world forcibly comes back to his mind and this *hymn* is addressed to that mind or the people of such mind. This *hymn* also belongs to the period of his political power and greatness as is made clear by the very opening lines of this *hymn* addressing those who come surrounded by kings riding on the elephant. It is significant that in the previous *hymn* our poet described himself as the famous *Ārūraṉ* of the great elephant, if our interpretation is correct, and that in this *hymn* he addresses his mind or the minds of those in great power like him in similar terms as riding on the elephant (1). The difference between himself and others is that our poet, as a freed soul, is conscious of the ephemeral nature and the temptations of the world and of the certain Grace of the Lord which takes the form of all these things of the world. He is, therefore, a Lord and not a slave of these temptations whilst others being unconscious of the illusions become a prey to them. It is this distinction which is the message of *Ārūrar's* life which suggests a comparison with the great *Jānaka*.

II

"Oh! Ye, who go about on elephants surrounded by the kings, when death comes, there will be none around you. Pray, keep this in your mind. Once you have fixed your mind thus on Him you need not change it (as we do in relation to the worldly things). Come along. Let us reach the Temple of our Father in *Etirkoḷpāṭi*" (1). The fear of Death, our poet knows, haunts the chiefs, and our poet takes advantage of this fear in addressing them. Next comes, in addition, the miseries of the world. "If there is birth there is always death. The household life is full of misery. (Do

not begin talking and arguing and deluding yourselves. Word is not always expressive and revealing; it comes also to deceive and confuse. Hence all the warring philosophies). If there is word, there is pretension. (Or, it may mean if there is enmity there will also be stratagem and cheating). Oh! Ye, of mind and heart. Let us reach the temple of the Lord" (2).

The net of passion spread out by cunning women hastens death for the pleasure hunters. "This body of sins goes and goes; decays and finally falls down, all of a sudden. Before that happens, without getting entangled in the net of the deceit of the beauties of the well shaped (or shaped like the innerside of the tender mango cut longitudinally) eyes, let us reach the Temple" (3). This attack is not on the righteous women.

Women symbolize the life of passions, the life of slavery to the five senses; leading one astray till that one becomes a laughing stock to all. "Look! There live the great Five in our minds. Ah! Ye, of the deceitful mind! Before you fall into the slough of Despondency, slighted by all, let us reach the temple of our Lord" (4). The same idea continues enforcing the old fear of ignominious death. "These Five, way-laying us in their high-way robbery, are eating us away. Before our white skull of grinning teeth and mouth reach the grave, let us reach the temple". (5).

"Those whom you esteem as leading a glowing life are but false pretenders. To fill up your bellies, you are deluded, though you move with us. But you need not cry over this. Let us reach the temple of the Lord" (6).

" (There the false sense of prestige and shame prevent you from mixing with the followers of God). Get rid of the sense of shame or false prestige. (You must get yourself reformed and become pure). Get rid of your faults. (The greatest danger, the very negation of this love is vengeance and anger and) this you must get rid of. (If the mind were to catch hold of the Lord, it must get rid of what it is at present holding on tightly)—the passionate selfish attachment to the deceitful household life of the damsels of sweet smelling tresses of hair. The place made thus vacant must be filled with the love of the Lord. Let us reach the temple" (7). Thus our poet describes the Pilgrim's Progress.

"If there is pleasure, there will be misery (they are the two sides of a coin). Ah! this poor household life! Ye of foolish mind! It will be sheer foolishness to speak of the aspect first. Let us reach the temple of the Lord" (8).

"The worldly relationships however dear and divine, come to naught except in relation to God. Fathers and mothers — they cannot be our props even to the extent of the tiny seed of the sesame plant — (an idea which our poet mentioned once before). Let us reach the temple of the Lord" (9).

(The poet makes a distinction between '*cintai*' and '*neñcu*', the contemplating mind and the feeling heart. He also speaks of '*maṉam*' (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8) — as that which thinks and of '*uḷḷam*' (1), the mind as the internal organ — *antahkaraṇa*).

III

This *hymn* is not a negation of life but a plea for a fuller life, once it glows with the love of the Lord. That is why he assures us, "Don't feel miserable. Our father will become one with us through and through and show the path of Heavens. He is the Lord who when we praise Him herein, blesses us with life hereafter" (6). "But take note, none but His lovers will ever reach the feet of the Great Master and *Guru of koṉṟai*" (8). "He is the Father (1), our Father (9), the Master (3), the *Dēva* (4), the Chief (6), the God (7), the Beginning (10), the Great Light" (10). "He is the Lord who has thought of this Temple for saving us" (10). "He is the Lord of *Etirkoḷpāṭi* caught in the bondage thrown out by the Bhaktas" (11). He is full of the love of the Bhaktas to worship whom our poet has fixed his mind, upon Them — our poet the slave of the followers of the Lord, himself a *Bhakta*, the son of *Caṭaiyaṉ*" (11).

IV

The *Purāṇic* references are also here — the blue throat (2), the mat-lock with water (2, 11), the bull (2, 7), the loin cloth (3), the destruction of the three cities (5), the bones (7), the crescent moon (9), the Fire unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (10), the Lord of the coral form besmeared with pearl like sacred ash (11), the Trinity and the Two (4) (male and female) turning out to be the one Lord of all these (4).

The experience of this *hymn*, whilst singing it, inspires our poet to assure the readers that those who are masters of this *hymn* will certainly come to worship the feet of the Lord — converting thus even Emperors into the slaves of the Lord, taking refuge in His feet. No other assurance is necessary or proper in this context (11).

CHAPTER XL

MŪPPATUMILLAI

(*Hymn* 18)

I

This *hymn* proceeds in a playful mood, like the *Bhikṣāṭana hymns* we had discussed earlier. Though there is no specific reference to this form except in a few places, the descriptions herein can apply to the *Bhikṣāṭana* form of the Lord as well. The interrogation is rhetorically raised, "Would we have come to serve Him if we had known this? (wearing the serpents, *etc.*) (1). This may playfully suggest the answer, "We would not have". Some take this chorus of the *hymn* not as an interrogation but an assertion in this sense. But there is also the more serious answer: "Even if we had known it, we would have come to serve Him". Thus there are the gradations of meaning from playfulness to seriousness. The poet in the very last verse speaks of the *hymn* as expressing the mode of dedicating oneself to His servces, clearly pointing out that the playful mood is only on the surface, whilst at bottom it is a *hymn* of love and self-surrender.

II

"He never grows old; He is never born; He never dies". Though this suggests His divinity, one may playfully speak thus of any matter as matter. "Unless He thinks of the cities in addition, His residence is the graveyard. His protectorate is *Vēḷvikkuṭi* and *Taṇṭurtti.* (These mean the city of Sacrifice and the cool Island, but the poet is punning on these phrases which may mean also the intoxicating drink and the bellows). If we had known that what he has tied round his waist is the serpent, would we have come to serve Him?" (1).

"He dances in the jungle of misery. It is impossible for everyone to have a sight of Him. (This may mean also that no one can bear the sight of Him). He dances and sings besmearing Himself with the ash dusts of a burning ghat. If we had known he eats what is given by the *Vēdiç* scholars with pure ghee raising

and guarding the Holy Fire in the round sacrificial pit, would we have come to serve Him?" (2). (This reference to *Maṟai* or *Vēdas* may mean also that he eats what is cooked with ghee in the round pit of fire by those who move about clandestinely).

"He has a thousand names (This jocularly suggests that He has thousand aliases and alibis.). He is neither man nor woman. His city is *Oṟṟiyūr* (This means also a city under mortgage). We do not know how He got the other cities. He swallowed the poison (leaving its indelible mark of this attempt at suicide in His throat). If we had known His necklace is the serpent, would we have come to serve Him?" (3).

"He has (nothing but) boar tusks and the young tortoise to wear. He rides on the bull. In the jungle of a burning ghat His followers speak whatever they experience. (It may mean they speak acccording to their sweet whims and fancies) and they fall in love with Him. But He wears one skin of the deer, throws the tiger skin on His shoulders and covers Himself up with the elephant skin. If we had known this, would we have come to serve Him?" (4).

"He has nothing but the alms, thrown by the city to eat after feeding others. He rides on the bull as though it were a horse. He makes His livelihood by inciting the *Bhūtas* to sing for Him. If we had known that He catches hold of the snakes in every '*pāḻi*' (*pāḻi* means a temple and also a cavern) and makes them dance for His livelihood, would we have come to serve Him?" (5).

"His daugher-in-law is a *kuṟava* — a mountaineer's girl. His following the boar as a *maṟava*, or hunter, is all illusion. So is it, His being All pervasive, the Beginning, Light and the faultless and unfailing *Dhārmic* ascetic. If we had known Him, would we have come to serve Him?" (6).

"He is the same unchanging nature — a mad man. He is the mother (ii) who begot me (i); the grand-mother (iii); their mothers (iv); the Lord (vii) or the Chief of the panel of their fathers (v) and their latters' mothers. (vi) (The numbers denote the seven generations going up from the poet). If all His wealth is His begging with the head of the deceased — if we had known this (great) *tapas* of His, would we have come to serve Him ?" (7). "He is the beyond—*Indra, Rudra, Viṣṇu* and *Brahma*. He removes the confusions and anxieties of these contemplating on Him. He

is beyond us. If He resides also within our Heart and that as an empty space would we have come to serve Him?" (8). (These may be taken in a jocular vein as statements to be laughed at as pretensions and contradictions and also seriously as expressions of the great truth).

"He blesses both Indra and *Rāvaṇa,* inimical to each other. He repeats the *mantras.* He sings the *Vēdas* and holds the deer in His hand. He is one with *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* but yet stands alone in between them unknown to them" (These may be taken as unbelievable contradictions and as serious truths.) (9).

Most of these are *Purāṇic* references especially to the *Kāpāli* dance and the *Bhikṣāṭaṇa* form. The poet thus comes again to relish the *purāṇic* lore with its message of Love.

III

The great philosophical truths are also hinted at. "The Lord is Deathless (1), birthless (1), ageless (1), sexless (3). He is the All Pervasive (6), the Beginning (6), the Light (6) and the *Aṟam* or *Dharma* (6), the occupant of the *Daharākāsa of the* Heart" (8). His experience of the Lord as residing in his own heart removing the anxieties and confusions, though otherwise He is beyond our ordinary reach, inspires him with a feeling that he himself is the Servant of the Lord for (seven) generations (7, 8).

IV

This *hymn* must also belong to the period of our poet's political greatness. He calls himself the king of his enemies coming from a great family, the chief of *Nāvalūr* (10). But he is still the great *Bhakta* who never swerves from the path of service to the servants of the Supreme Lord, those master-songsmen singing our poet's *Tamiḻ* of beauty. Our poet describes himself as one who goes in search of them (10). That those who could sing these *hymns* expressing how the poet could serve the Lord — will go to reside there beyond everything. *Paralōka* is nothing worth mentioning. It is so very easy of achievement by them. That is how our poet feels whilst singing this *hymn* of self-surrender and enjoying every mark of His love and beauty — marks which allow a jocular vein of playful speech with the Lord. What greater liberty can one expect more than this? Those who are so free with the Lord are always in the *Paralōka* — it is not anything to be achieved hereafter (10).

CHAPTER XLI

TIRUMUTUKUṈṞAM

(*Hymn* 25)

I

This *hymn* takes us back into the inner circle of our poet's domestic life — a life which we have often compared with that of *Janaka*. According to the tradition, our poet was given gold, when he prayed to the Lord of *Mutukuṉṟam*, which he was ordered to throw into the river there to be gathered from the Temple-tank at *Tiruvārūr* after his return to *Tiruvārūr*. It was this *hymn* which our poet is said to have sung for gathering the gold at *Tiruvārūr*. As already pointed out there is nothing in this *hymn* itself giving any details of this miracle. This is one of the *hymns* in which reference is made to his wife *Paravai*. This is very much like the *Kōḷili hymn* (*H*. 20). "*Aruḷāy* or *Aruḷīr aṭiyēṉ iṭṭalaṅkeṭavē*" is the refrain. The pattern of the sentence in every verse is the same: the first and the second lines address the Lord, the second lines ending with the words "*Mutukuṉṟu Amarntīr*" (1, 2, 4) or "*Mutukkuṉṟam Amarntavaṉē*" (3, 6, 8, 9) or "*Mutukuṉṟu Amarntāy*" (5), "*Mutukuṉṟu Uṭaiyāy*" (7); the third lines describe the beauty and the anxiety of *Paravai;* the 4th lines beg of the Lord to bless him by destroying the miseries.

(*Iṭṭalam* is a Dravidian word found also in *Kaṉṉaḍa;* one wonders whether it had come into *Tamiḻ* due to the *Kaṉṉaḍa* influence of the *Hoysaḷas* of Mysore with whom came into contact the *Gaṅgas* and others, in the age of *Ārūrar*. '*Iṭu*' as in '*iṭukku*', '*iṭukkaṉ*' means a narrow path — a straitened circumstance. '*Aḷam*' means crowding or pressure. Here the poet begs of the Lord to remove his difficulties by pointing out to the distress of *Paravai*.

II

Paravai's beauty is described in terms of lightning flash of her subtle waist (1), of her tresses of hair of fresh fragrance (2, 8) and full of flowers (9), of her broad eyes full of collyrium (3), of the beauty of her bosom (4), of her well shaped posterior (some will interpret it as pudendum), beautiful like the hooded serpent

(5), of her fingers playing the ball (7) and of her beauty and nature-befitting this world (or full of forbearance like the mother earth) (6).

His sufferings are next described. "Ah! What have you done, my Master, in the presence of this *Paravai?*" pointing to her near-by (1). "She is depressed and distressed and is fading away" (2). "Let her not pine away" (3). This withering away — *Vāṭṭam* — is referred to in three places (2, 3, 5). In another place the phrase used is *'Kuṇam koṇṭiruntāḷ'* (4) which must be taken to mean the same thing. (*'Kuṇa'* as a *Tamiḻ* root in such words as *'Kuṇakku'*, *'Kuṇalai'* and its related form *'Kuṭa'*, means something bent. *'Kuṇam'* will then mean drooping and bending low, out of dejection of the heart or the exhaustion of the body). The poet begs of the Lord in six verses to bless and help him in her very presence (1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9). This *'Vāṭṭam'* must be physical and, therefore, the misery or *'iṭṭaḷam'* has to be cured by material help. Our poet speaks of the Lord giving him gold even whilst *Umpar* and *Vāṉavar* were standing together in front (2). (This distinction of *Vāṉavar* and *Umpar* is one like *Dēvar* and *Amarar*[1] already noted by us. Can this be a reference to the help received by him on previous occasions?

III

This is not hankering after worldly things but relying upon the Lord for everything, after our poet's absolute self surrender to the Lord as already referred to in our discussion of the *Kōḷili hymn* (*H*. 20). The Lord is to our poet every kind of relationship and, therefore, he appeals to Him for saving his wife from the straitened circumstance she was in — which he claims as his own suffering as well. The poet looks upon *Paravai*[2] as the gift of God and, therefore, loves her whole heartedly, pleased with her beauty and moral grandeur. It is this that distinguishes the life of this couple of divine love from the lives of ordinary married people. Our poet addresses the Lord as the real truth of all relationship — the Master (1, 6), the Lord (2), the Father (3), the Merciful (of the eyes of beauty) (4), the Chief or Elder Brother (5), the *Antaṇaṉ* (7) (a Brahmin but according to *Tiruvaḷḷuvar*

1. 7:63:2.
2. 7:46:11.

'*Aṟavaṉ*' with no attachment to the world but of beautiful and cool qualities), the King (8), and the Dancer (9) in the Heart of Love, *i.e.*, the Lover.

IV

The *Purāṇic* descriptions abound in the first two lines of every verse. To our poet begging for gold, the gold-like form of the Lord comes uppermost in his mind when he begins this *hymn* (1), so do the divine acts which removed the obstacles of others—the tiger's skin (1), the destruction of the three cities (1, 5), the three eyes (3), the crescent moon (4, 10), the company of the Mother (4), the elaboration of the *Vēdas* (4), the blue throat (5), the worship by *Viṣṇu, Brahma,* sun and *Indra* (6) and the eighteen group of *Dēvas* (8). The memory that He blessed him once before showering gold on him inspires him to make this request (2). The *Amarars* come in order to bow down before Him, the Oldest of the old of all these worlds, the Unique Lord of the winkless *Dēvas* (2), begging for His Grace; and Him *Ārūrar* of *Nāvalūr* of rich fields (10), the chief of the *Vēdic* Brahmins (10), has described in this divine *hymn* or the king of *hymns* (10). He begs for Lord's love — for the bliss of *Śivalōka* and not for merely gold (10) which also represents to him one form of divine love. This is made clear by the final verse which assures those who had mastered this *hymn* that to them *Śivalōka* or the sphere of the Absolute or *Śiva* the Good, is easy of reach (10).

V

This *hymn* also belongs to the period of his political greatness for our poet speaks in terms of royalty describing the *hymn* itself as being full of kingship, *i.e.*, the king of the *hymn* itself as being full of kingship, *i.e.*, the king of *hymns* (10) but without, at the same time, losing his feeling of self-surrender to the Lord. However, as already stated, '*Iṟaiyār pāṭal*' may mean a divine *hymn.* He cries to the Lord that he has not known himself remaining without praising the Lord (9). Our poet describes the Lord in reference to this feeling of his. "He is the Supreme of the Supreme (9) showering His blessings on His *Bhaktas.* He is free by nature, a *Mukta* and yet a *Bhakta*" (3). Our poet calls Him a *Bhakta* (3)—for *Bhaktas* are none other than Himself. This description of the Lord as *Bhakta* ought to be taken along with the other description, "*Śaivaṉ, Pācupataṉ*" revealing to us the cult of the

Śaivite Bhaktas so dear to the heart of our poet, the author of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.*

VI

The description of *Mutukuṉṟam* comes in mainly as the place of the Lord, where flock all (10). In one place he refers to the drums resounding when the eighteen kinds of *Dēvas* surround Him — probably in a festival (8). There is another idea — a favourite idea of our poet, that of the holy place, assuming *'Sārūpya'*, by adorning the crescent moon on its crown towers (7). "Here are gardens full of bunches of flowers surrounding and cooling the great fortress walls of the palaces, on which the crescent moon comes and stays — that very crescent moon reaching the mat-lock of yours, O, Lord of *Mutukuṉṟam!*" (7).

CHAPTER XLII

NAMAKKAṬIKAḶĀKIYA AṬIKAḶ

(*Hymn* 33)

I

This *hymn,* though, according to tradition, is said to have been sung at *Tiruvārūr* when our poet returned to that place after his pilgrimage, does not belong to any specific temple. This *hymn* is, therefore, named after the refrain or ending of every verse herein — *"Namakkaṭikaḷākiya Aṭikaḷ"*. "The Lord, our Master, is He, the same as the Lord of the kite-canopied jungle. Is He the same as the Lord of the dead skull? Is He the youth sharing His Body with the damsel of the mountain, *etc.?"* (1):—This is the pattern of the sentence, piling up the descriptions of the Lord in the form of interrogations. Most of these descriptions belong to the *Purāṇic* lore, and show that our poet's mind is captivated in this period of his life by these stories. As in the case of the *Bhikṣāṭana hymns* the descriptions are applicable to the *Kāpāli* and the *Bhikṣāṭana* form, revealing the heart of the loving damsels of *Dārukavana,* in the heart of our poet himself. Every interrogation is expressive of the loving regard of the poet for that description. One could see Him dancing in joy like a lover, asking forth for confirming the marks of the beloved, while, at the same time, giving his own descriptions and distinguishing features of the Lord for comparison. This *hymn* is addressed to the *Bhaktas,* our friends, guides and philosophers. He has experienced his Lord and they talk of their Lord — the one Lord of the Universe. "Is that universal Lord, the Lord of us all, our Master of this mark and of this mark — marks which have appealed to him in his own experience of the Lord?" The *Bhaktas* may be imagined to confirm his identification, when, as a result, his joy must have known no bounds, like the joy of *Kampan's Sītā* hearing the identifications of the hero who broke the *Śvayamvara* bow, as confirming her own marks of identification

of her own *Rāma* — the youth following the saint, the youth of the lotus red eyes:

> "*Kōmuṉi yuṭaṉ varu koṇṭal ceṉṟapiṉ*
> *Tāmaraik kaṇṇiṉaṉ eṉṟa taṉmaiyāl*
> *Āmava ṉēkol eṉṟu aiyam nīṅkiṉāḷ*
> *Vamamē kalaiyiṉuḷ vaḷarnta talkulē*"
>
> (*Bālakāṇḍam:*
> *Kārmukappaṭalam*: V. 62).

II

Lost in the bliss, our poet does not mention any result flowing from a recitation of this *hymn* but inquires of the *Bhaktas* as in *hymn* No. 73, whether this our Master would accept his services and save him also.

III

This is addressed by *Ārūrar* of *Nāval*, the father of *Vaṉappakai*, the *Vaṉṟoṇṭaṉ* as he describes himself to the *Bhaktas*, thus revealing the great value the poet places on this cult of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.*

"You think and praise as it suits or as it pleases you — or according to your capacity"—thus are the *Bhaktas* addressed and described (2, 3, 6, 7, 10). He begs all of them to come together and to come near Him (He hankers after their physical presence near him) and to tell him what the truth is (2, 3) — those *Bhaktas* who are of the qualities setting up the standard to be followed by others:—the guides. "I worship at your feet and praise you. Pray, bless me (with the truth — 10)" — thus he addresses them, in all humility, as his masters. "I may be cruel, I may be wicked. But I am a slave of His; my mind is always thinking of Him. Will He accept and save me?" (10)—that is his last query. He thus expresses with all humility describing himself a fool (6), a cruel and wicked man (10).

IV

The graveyard (1, 7, 8), the skull (1, 2), the mat-lock (1, 2), the youthful form (1), the ear-ring (1), the bull (1, 2, 5, 7), the sacred ash (1, 3), the crescent moon (1, 5), the river and the

mat-lock (1), the serpent (2, 5, 7), the *karantai* flower (2), His form red like *kuṉṟi* (3), the three eyes (4), the bath of milk and honey (4), the elephant's skin (4), the *koṭukoṭṭi* dance (5), the *vīṇā* (5), the lordship of the *Vēdas* (5), the trident (7), the blue throat (7), the begging at every door (7), the city (8), His being beyond the reach of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8), the dance of eight arms (8), the scandals of Jains (9), the formless (10) — all these are lovingly referred to in terms of the *Purāṇic* mythology.

V

"Would He accept us as His servants, lovingly feeding us with alms?" (2). "Is He a beggar because He has nothing or is He so, though He has everything?" (3). "Further, is He that One who is the Great *Aṟavar,* the *Dhārmic* ascetic renouncing everything?" (6). "Is He that One Good to those attached to Him?" (4). "Is He that One that is our Master full of His sovereignty?" (5). "Is He that One who understands and sympathizes with our sufferings?" (6). "Is He that One good to those praising Him?" (6). "Is He that One who takes to heart our words?" (6). "Further, is He that One who saves us?" (2). "Speaking to us the truth and nothing but the truth, (6), is He that great One who has many a people to sing His praises?" (8). "Is He that One good to those attached to Him?" (8) — These interrogations give us specific features of the Lord as our poet has experienced Him.

VI

This is one of the *hymns* in which there is a reference to the *Jains.* Our poet mentions their characteristic names with their peculiar endings: *Namaṇa Nandi, Karuma Vīraṉ* and *Darumacēnaṉ.* They stand like hillocks with no clothes, without any sense of shame, uttering their *mantras* — *Namo*. . . . . . with the nasal sounds predominating, which our poet caricatures as *ñamaṇa ñā ñaṇa ñāṇa ñoṇam*"—The complaint against them is that they hurl abuses on the Lord.

TIRUNAḶḶĀṞU

(*Hymn* 68)

I

Our poet begged of the followers in the previous *hymn* whether the Lord would accept him. Of course he is sure from his own experience that the Lord would save him. The implication of a possible negative reply however lurks there. Love is reciprocal and the contingency of a negative reply can only arise if the poet forgets the Lord. But can he? Has not he already exclaimed, "What shall I think of, forgetting Him?" (*H*. 57). Mind never forgets the happy things it has experienced and the Lord is the sweetest nectar. He has addressed the Lord as "*Ārā iṉṉamudu*" (*H*. 27: 7). But this conception enters the centre of his mind henceforth, and he repeats calling, "The Lord of *Naḷḷāṟu* as '*Amudu*', to him a dog of a slave" (8). This is the burden of this *hymn*: "*Naḷḷāṟaṉai Amudai nāyiṉēṉ maṟantu eṉ niṉaikkēṉē?*". In the last verse, our poet himself gives the substance of this *hymn* in these terms — "the great *hymn* of a garland of five and five exclaiming, 'What is there for us to be forgetting *Śiva?*' " (10).

II

Amudu is the zenith of his happy experience of the Lord and the various happy descriptions of his of the Lord are piled up one after another, before reaching this acme of bliss. The descriptions are mostly as in the previous *hymns,* of the *purāṇic* forms of the Lord clearly revealing the fact about the poet's mind at this stage, being blissfully immersed in the *purāṇic* mythology as expressing the message of his own experience — the gold form (1), the white sacred ash (1), the blue throat (1) (all forming a harmony of colours), the Great Fire unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (1), the flaying of the elephant (1), the bull (1), the *koṉṟai* (2), the bath in five fold fruits of the cow (2), the company of the Mother (3, 8), the mat-lock (3), the saviour of the boy (*Mārkkaṇḍa*) (4), the destruction of Death (4), the feast of poison (4), the destruction of *Kāma* (6), the eye in the forehead (6), the blessing shower-

ed on *Arjuna* (7), the Teacher of the Banyan Tree (7), the father of *Subrahmaṇya* (7), the vanquishment of *Rāvaṇa* and his redemption through his music (9).

III

Our poet gives expression to his personal experience of the Lord, sometimes as peculiar to him, sometimes as the universal experience of all the *Bhaktas*. The Lord is the *Cit-Jñāna,* the Light and our poet experiences Him as the sprout of *Jñāna* (2), as the musician of the *Vēdas* (2), especially the *Śāma Vēda* (1), as the Lord whose feet the *Antaṇar* full of the *Vēdic* lore and the *Vēdic* sacrifices worship (5), as the Pure flame of Light dispelling all darkness of words and their meanings (6). His supremacy is emphasized by such descriptions as this, "The Lord of the Sevenfold worlds" (2). This is experienced as such in the universal vision the poet sees. The Lord is the earth, the wind, the water, the fire and this vacant space (harmonizing all their contradictions into His unity). He is there, in all these as their very life and worth even as the very fragrance in a flower (3). God is the most precious thing, the best that could be desired or loved — the gem, the blotless gem (5),[1] the gold, the mountain of gold itself (6). This love is the greatest divine bliss. He is the sweet honey (3), the sweet fountain of nectar gushing forth from our tongue when we sing of His praises in the *Kāmaram* tune (3).

This Love makes us happy — giving us everything. He is the munificent patron — *Vaḷḷal* (9). He is the *Kaṟpaka* tree (6). He is the All Powerful (1) — unique beyond any comparison (1) — the Lord of the immortals (3), but yet He cannot get away from the minds of those contemplating on Him (4). He removes the *karmas* of those praising Him (2). He is the Lord of the *Vēdas* destroying the *karmas* of those bowing at His feet[2] (8). He is searched everywhere and is never seen but yet He has come easily within my reach — the poor me (5). At last God's Feet have accepted me as His servant and saved me by showing His

1. *Māsilāmaṇi* (5) is a description of the Lord which our poet and *Śaivites* are fond of.

2. *Vēdam* means *Brahma,* the Creator; this suggests the meaning "Our Lord is the Creator who is Himself the destroyer of *karma*", a good example of oxymoron.

wonderful title-deed (6). He is a great moral saint, *Aṟavaṉ* (7), but yet He is the Lord patiently putting up with and forgiving all the crimes I had done (7). He is the envoy easily within my reach (8), the Lord who has blessed me with His friendship forgiving all my perverse acts (8).

The name expressing all these beautiful thoughts is honoured as a *mantra, i.e.,* Śiva, a word which our poet repeats twice in this *hymn* (3, 10). The other popular name is *Śambhu*—the giver of Happiness (1).

In this overflowing of the Heart, feasting on the mythological descriptions as expressions of his spiritual experience, the poet has no space available for a description of the Holy place except for referring to its ever expanding fragrance (7), being surrounded by the crowding gardens (10).

IV

Our poet describes himself as the father of *Ciṅkaṭi* and *Vaṉap-pakai* and as belonging to *Nāvalūr*. He gives his proper name *(Ār)ūraṉ* and the title *Vaṉṟoṇṭaṉ* which he had acquired as a *Bhakta*. "To those masters of this *hymn* who with melting heart can recite this, there is no death and exit or entrance into the world; and they will be easily getting themselves immersed in the flood of the divine Bliss" — this is the assurance our poet gives (10); for, that must have been his own experience whilst singing this *hymn,* whose characteristic feature may be epitomized in one word '*Amudu*' (1-9). This emphasis differentiates this *hymn* from the *hymn* No. 57 which has the same refrain and paints out a higher spiritual development enjoying more the confidence in God.

CHAPTER XLIV

TIRUKKAṬAVŪR MAYĀNAM

(*Hymn* 53)

I

As in the previous *hymn,* the *purāṇic* lore occupies the central place in the heart of our poet. Here, the Lord stands as it were before our mind's eye in a concrete form as enjoyed by our poet. The *hymn* is on the Lord of *Tirukkaṭavūr Mayāṉam. Mayāṉam* is a burning ghat and one wonders whether the temple here is a '*Paḷḷi paṭai*' (temple) of any great king. Kings, are *Perumāṉaṭikaḷ; Periyaperumāṉaṭikaḷ* (Vv. 1-9) will signify the greater king, the God.

II

In consonance with the grave-yard where the temple is situated, the Lord appears to us in this *hymn,* surrounded by the army of *Bhūtas* (1), *Pēy* (3), *Pāriṭam* (5), with the begging bowl of a grinning skull (2), besmearing Himself with the dust of the graveyard (6) — all these clearly suggesting the *Kāpāli* going a-begging. *Ārūrar* makes a specific mention of the '*mayāṉam*' for the burden of every verse in this *hymn* is "*Mayāṉattup periya perumāṉ aṭikaḷē*". The place, as attached to *Kaṭavūr* was known as *Kaṭavūr Mayāṉam.* This is the name found in verses 1 and 5. In other verses except 8, *Kaṭavūr* is mentioned as the chief place. In the verse 8 also there might have been such a mention. '*Pīṭār Kaṭavūr mayāṉattu*' might have been the original form instead of '*Pīṭār caṭaiyār mayāṉattu*', the latter reading was probably due to the influence of the verses 9, 4 and 6 which have '*Caṭaiyār mayāṉam.* The pattern of the sentence in every verse is 'the great king of this *mayāṉam* is the Lord of the various descriptions (known to us as that of *Śiva* in the *Purāṇas*).

III

The very first *hymn* sings of the Lord coming before us like a mountain of *māṇikkam—māṇikkam* so dear to our poet—crowned with the crescent moon, the Lord of fragrant *koṉṟai,* riding a

bull along with the damsel, surrounded by the army of *Bhūtas,* the universal Lord of all—*Viṣṇu, Brahma, Indra, Dēvas, Nāgas* and the *Tāṉavas* (1). In the other verses reference is made to the other *purāṇic* descriptions—the sacred thread (2), the singing of the *Vēdas* (2), the eye in the forehead (2), the destruction of Death (2), and the three cities (2), the tiger's skin (3), the eight arms (3), the begging (3), the ornament of serpents (5), the elephant skin (5), the tusk of the boar (5), the pendent of a necklace (*tāli*) of a tortoise (5), the loin cloth (6), the earring (6), the young deer (9), the feast of poison (7), the vanquishment of *Rāvaṇa* (7), the gift to *Arjuna* (8), the battle-axe (9), the destruction of *Dakṣa's* sacrifice (9) and the head of *Brahma* (2, 9), the gift of the discus to *Viṣṇu* (9) and the preaching of *Dharma* (9).

IV

The Lord is called '*Pācupatar*' (6) (See our remarks on this word given elsewhere).

Describing the grave-yard, he is reminded of the sects of *Pāsupatas* (6) and *Māvratīs* (6), (the *Māvratīs* wear a sacred thread of hair called *pañcavaṭi* (6). Please see our description under the *Kāpāli* form).

The Lord as the Saviour—an idea which is the message of our poet—is also lovingly referred to: He is the Lord of all, blessing all, without ever saying no (4). The whole world is His (7). But His city is *Oṟṟiyūr* and *Ārūr* (7). (This statement is made in a jocular vein because the poet is punning on the word *Oṟṟiyūr* and *Ārūr* which in addition to their denoting the cities of those names, may also mean a city under mortgage and a city of someone not known, respectively. ('*Ārūr*'—literally meaning: Whose is the city?). He is the Lord of a thousand names (7), one who blessed His followers removing all their miseries (10).

V

The way of worshipping the Lord is also referred to. The *toṇṭar* or the followers sing their song in accompaniment to the drum—full of sound (4). We have suggested very often that the *Pūtam, Pēy* and *Pāriṭam* ought to be identified with the *Bhaktas* or followers of God and after mentioning the *Toṇṭars*

in one verse (4), he refers to the *Pāriṭam* (5) singing and dancing full of *Bhakti,* whilst the Lord stands before them as a mad man, mad in love with them going a-begging for their love and soul (5). The bath in the five-fold yields of the cow is also mentioned (9). Reference to the 1000 names of the Lord may suggest the idea of '*sahasranāma*', worshipping the Lord showering flowers on His feet at the mention of every name out of these thousand names (7). The Brahmins or the *Vēdic* scholars also worship Him (2), the Brahmins of *Kaṭavūr,* where abound palatial residences (10). This *mayāṉam* is near *Kaṭavūr* and our poet calls this place *Kaṭavūr Mayāṉam* (1, 5), whilst in other places, he calls Him also the Lord of *Kaṭavūr* (2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10).

VI

The poet is happy in describing the *purāṇic* personality of the Lord, the Lord revealing to him as such at the temple of *Mayāṉam.* Our poet says he has searched for the real greatness of the Lord and for the correct words expressing Him, and has given expression to these in these good *Tamiḻ* verses (10). The sins of the followers who sing this *hymn* or listen to this will be destroyed (10). Having enjoyed the description whilst singing this *hymn* and feeling purified of all forms of songs the poet assures his readers of the same experience (10). The poet has completely forgotten his individuality, so completely lost in the bliss of the description of the Lord, that he does not make any personal reference to himself except in the last verse which usually gives his name. This *hymn* may be taken to belong to the age of his political greatness because he gives the proper name as *Ārūraṉ Nampi,* a period when he was thinking of his title of *Nampi* also as much a proper name as *Ārūraṉ* (10).

CHAPTER XLV

TIRUKKAṬAVŪR

(*Hymn* 28)

I

In this *hymn* the poet becomes subjective. The same description of the Lord as the *Kāpāli* and *Bhikṣāṭana* of the grave yard still continues to occupy the central place. But the world before him, the world of his political influence with chiefs and kings who claim him as their companion, stands contrasted with this divine bliss (10). He enjoys repeating these descriptions and exclaims after the experience of this joy, "Ah, My Lord, my Nectar, Who is there as my help or prop except yourself?"—This is the burden of this *hymn.* He has already explained God bestowing on Him His friendship.[1] This is what our poet himself states in the last verse as the theme of this *hymn,* the interrogation being, "Can there be any other help or prop?" The bliss of the previous *hymn* and this *hymn* comes forth as the assertion, "Who is my companion except yourself?" The first two lines and a half in every verse describe the Lord; the second half of the third line ends in *"Kaṭavūrtaṉuḷ vīraṭṭattu em"* (1, 2, 5, 6, 7) or *"Kaṭavūrt-tiruvīraṭṭattuḷ"* (3, 8, 9, 10) or *"Kaṭvūrtaṉuḷ Vīraṭṭāṉattu"* (4). (As suggested by one reading all these endings must have been originally of one kind only, *viz., "Kaṭavūr taṉuḷ vīraṭṭattu em"*). The fourth line ends with the words, *"Eṉ Amutē eṉakku ār tuṇai nī alātē"?* except in 3, 8 where instead of *"Eṉ Amutē"* they begin with *"Eṉtātaipperumāṉ"* (3), *"Āṟār Ceñcaṭaiyāy"* (8). The first word of these fourth lines mention the emphatic relationship of the Lord to himself. This is the pattern of the sentence in every verse.

II

The conception of *Vīraṭṭāṉam* had been already referred to in our description of the *Purāṇic* mythology. The *Purāṇic* perso-

1. 7:68:8.

nality is described in this *hymn* in relation to the sacred ash (1), the trident (1), the *Ganges* (1), the *konrai* (1), the crescent moon (2), the beggar's bowl of a *Brahma Kapāla* (2), the blue throat (2, 4, 5), the exposition of *Dharma* (3), the destruction of Death (3), the deer (3), the elephant's skin (4, 5), the gold form (4), the company of the Mother (4), the serpent (5), the graveyard (7), the ear ring (8), the tusk of the boar (8) and the invisibility of the Lord to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (9).

III

The poet gives expression to his subjective experience apart from the realization of these *purāṇic* truths. The Lord is *"Śarva vida bandhu"*—all kinds of relationships—the master (1), the Sovereign (2), his father (3), his brother (6), his Chief (5), the precious and rare one (7); the creator (9)—as mentioned through the emphatic beginning words of the 4th lines. In all the verses except for the words, *"En Amutē"*, are found words connoting a conception of the Lord as experienced by our poet coming more and more to the forefront as we stand elsewhere. Therefore, in the two other verses (3, 8) also these words must have a place. In the third verse a reading may be suggested *"Entāy ennamutē"* and in the eighth verse, it might have been *"Ārār ennamutē"* ("The Lord of the River *Ganges,* my nectar or my nectar carrying the river).

He gives more of his experience, "You entered into my soul—no delusion is this—and you have not till now known leaving me (5). "I am your slave, O, my rich Light! O, *Siva*! (8)". I cannot decide and place my reliance on anybody other than yourself (8)". You are unknown to *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* but yet you are the sweet fruit of enjoyment for us (*Payan*—9)—Our Supreme Lord, the Supreme Light beyond everything (9)". The transcendental and immanent principle as experienced by him is given expression to, "He is the earth, water, fire, space, air and all the elements evolving from these subtle categories (6). "He has further become the male and female and sexless beings and other forms of this world—the One who has thus assumed these forms (6). Yet He is (the gem) the apple of the eye (6). He is the beauty (*Ēr*) (10), and the all pervasive Lord (*Irai* 10) of the beautiful chief of *Nāvalūr*.

IV

Thinking of the Beauty of the Lord, our poet himself feels he is beautiful—out of the feeling of communion. But he hastens to describe himself as the slave, the servant of His feet (10). Enjoying the divine bliss all through this *hymn* when describing the Lord and being in communion with Him and the divine bliss of the sphere of the Absolute beyond everything, he assures his readers of his *Tamil* verse of this world that they will all be undergoing the same experience of the bliss of *Paralōka*—being in that *Paralōka* itself (10).

CHAPTER XLVI

TIRUVALAMPURAM

(*Hymn* 72)

I

In this *hymn* (*i*), the holy place of natural beauty reminding one of God's Grace and greatness, (*ii*), the subjective experience of the poet and (*iii*) the *purāṇic* descriptions as objectifying his personal experience become unified and the joy of this harmony may be heard in the trot-like movement of these *kali* verses almost echoing the natural and rhythmic movements of falling fruits and the waves of the sea, the rhythmic activities of the Lord of the *Purāṇas* and the rhythmic beating of the joyful heart of the poet. The rhythmic song of this *hymn* makes *Cekkiḻār* describe this as '*Urai ōcai-t tiruppatikam*'. The importance of Temple as the reservoir or fountain of divine love has been pointed out. This *hymn* starts with all this in mind.

II

In the previous *hymn* the poet waking up in this world, affirmed that no one of this world could be relied for as help. In this *hymn,* the idea of the temple in which is enshrined the incarnation of the Lord as the beauty of the idol comes to his mind and he cries in joy, "Why a human companion for help! He is this piece of earth. Even an iota of this earth is enough—I have found and realized herein a refuge for me—me, who has been in search of an earthly companion and support in this place of the Lord (1), my Master (*Aṭikaḷ*—3, 8)". "This *Valampuram,* is His place; the place of One who is the One great light for all the eight points of the compass (10)". Our poet must have experienced this in his universal vision. "He is sweet to me. He is sweet to His (our?) people. Ah! He has been sweet to our mind all through the sevenfold births" (1).

"His place—the place of the Lord of these qualities and activities—is *Valampuram*"—this is the pattern of this *hymn.* Every verse ends in these words, "*Iṭam Valampuramē*" (with the sudden

implied suggestion of an oxymoron, for *'iṭam'* in addition to its meaning here, 'place', also means 'left', whilst the word *'valam'* in the phrase *'Valampuram'* means right. The three half lines pile up its descriptions or activities of the Lord.

III

The descriptions of the *purāṇic* stories are epitomized forcibly in the swift moving short but telling phrases. The burning of the three cities (2), the garment of tree bark (2), the tiger skin (2), the skin of the vanquished *Nara* (*Narasimha* or *Trivikrama*) or the skin of the serpent (2), the beggar at every door (2), the Fire dance (2), the sacred ash (3), the fiery serpent (3), the strategy (5), the battle axe (5), the river bedecked mat-lock (3), the bull (8), the bull flag (3), the mountain bow (5), the elephant skin (6), the dance hall of the graveyard (7), the songs of dance (7), the company of the Mother (7) and the begging bowl of a skull (8)—are all referred to.

IV (a)

As expressed in the opening line itself, our poet who has been speaking of the feet of the Lord as his refuge, here speaks of this holy place—an iota of its good earth—as the future refuge; he speaks with the joy of a great discovery (1). This *hymn,* therefore, is a *hymn* on *Valampuram* which becomes identified with the Lord. That is why the poet refers to the *hymn* in its last verse as his words on *Valampuram,* referring to himself before that great refuge, as *Vaṉṟoṇṭaṉ, Ūraṉ* of the rare *Tamiḻ,* of the precious community. This community has to be interpreted as referring to the community of *Śaivite* followers. That is how *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators interpret the words, *'Kulam tarum'* used by *Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār* of the *Pallava* Age; this interpretation is based on the words of *Periyāḻvār* who speaks specifically of the *Toṇṭakkulam,* the community of *Bhaktas* and the servants of the Lord.

IV (b)

This community, enjoys repeating times without number, the glories of God a repetition which appears to others as mad babbling—*'pitaṟṟal'* (11). Our poet in relation to the difficulty he felt in becoming a member of this community describes it as *'Aruṅkulam'* (11), the rare or precious community. But when

he sees the greatness of this group ever increasing in number and saving innumerable people of the world he describes it as *Peruṉ-kulam* (11), or the Great Community. It is their greatness to recite this *hymn* to rave interminably and unconsciously in the delirium of divine love. (This is according to the reading *'Peruṅ-kulattavar koṭu piṭaṟṟal'*. The other reading is *'Peruṅkulattava-roṭu piṭaṟṟal'* (11) when the meaning will be, "It is one's greatness to recite this along with the great community of *Bhaktas*").

IV (c)

Coming to speak of this *'Toṇṭakkulam'* as *'Peruṅkulam'* and *'Aruṅkulam'*, he describes the other community of the wordly people, who amass wealth and perform all charities and occupy this holy place as the sons born of the great community of the black sea, *Peruṅkuṭi Vāṇikar* as they are called, protecting and rearing, as such children of the sea, the ships coming laden with the wealth of foreign countries. These are the traders who enrich the place where *Dēvas* reside (4) in search of God. This reminds one of the light house of ancient times—a light on the beach for showing the ships that the shore is nearby; the Lord is, therefore, described as the light for all eight points of the compass (10).

IV (d)

This place is on the beach—it must have been much nearer the sea than it is today. These waves come in rows in turn, one after the other—a kind of group dance competition (4). The waves of the wide expanse of sea dash against the place—reminding us of the stroke of the Lord's Grace. The sandy dunes forming a bank as it were, is giving way (*iṭikarai*—9). These waves carry as a great burden the gems, pearls and corals and throw on the sandy dunes on the beach (5). The sandy expanse reminds us of the dance hall of grave-yard with palmyra fruit falling down as though it were a drum placed so as to keep time with the dance (1). The waves dash rhythmically and perhaps with the same rhythm fall the fruits of curved but cool cocoanut and palmyra plants, where hum the bees to feast on their fragrant honeyed juice (4). The palmyra fruits fall almost on the sea on the beach where this *Valampuram* is (1). The poet is catching the rhythm and expressing it in his verse as *'caṭacaṭa'* (9). It is not a mere sandy desert; it is full of paddy fields surrounded and beautified by gardens inviting the very waves—a beautiful

place, where, in the extensive fields, crowd the carps and where in the places interspersed with the *aṭumpu* creepers (6), the conches glowing bright with the waves of the seas are carried for their honey moon (6).

V

The *hymn* also refers to the *Jains* as carrying a pot and eschewing flesh as vegetarians. They saw the blind *Taṇṭi Nāyaṉār* of the stick gaining his eyesight and fell at his victorious feet, losing their challenge. The Lord has this *Taṇṭi* as his relation. (The Lord has become the light to this blind sage; Yes). He is the Light for the eight points of the compass (10).

CHAPTER XLVIII

TIRUVEṆKĀṬU

(*Hymn* 6)

I

In the previous *hymn* the poet sang the glory of the holy place itself as the glory of the Lord, experiencing the harmony of the *purāṇic* Lord as shining within himself and within that place. The *Purāṇic* lore establishes harmony amidst all contradictions through the love of the Lord, flowing out to save every one. In this *hymn,* he emphasizes the contradictions, to appreciate better the harmony. Our poet begs of the Lord to reveal the truth of these contradictory acts and appearances of His. This *hymn* is in the form of nine interrogations and each verse ends with the words, "*E<u>ṉṉ</u>ē vēlai cū<u>l</u> Veṇkāṭa<u>ṉ</u> <u>n</u>īrē*"!—"O, Lord of *Veṇkāṭu,* surrounded by the sea! Why have you done this?" The remaining part of the verses describe the contradictory acts and appearances.

II

"The serpent is on your crown; but the tiger's skin is on your waist. You pounced on the three cities to burn but blessed the three *asuras* then and there. Enraged, you flayed the man, (the lion man) but you were happy with him. You, the Lord, go a-begging, you of the natural beauty, but carrying the dead skull. Why this? You of *Vēṇkaṭu,* surrounded by the seas"! (1).

"You have slighted your former form, *i.e.* of being in company with the Mother, but you were happy with it. You refused to utter any word even unto the *Dēvas* and discarded every one, but you were glad of them. You in the presence of the father *Viṣṇu,* opened up your eyes and burnt down *Kāma,* who came to destroy your *tapas* and you were glad of it. What is this victory? (For, it did not last long since you married the damsel falling a prey to her love)" (2).

"Surrounded by the ghosts (*pāriṭam*) you go with your damsel but with a loin cloth of an ascetic. Pray tell us the truth; Sir,

I am asking you only. You dance but ride on the bull, speaking of your greatness whilst begging. What is this?" (3).

"You are the life of music; you have become the song itself. *Bhaktas* think of you; but you go and fill their heart even before that. (This is according to one reading *'Pattar cittam paravikkoṇṭīr'*. The other reading is *'Pattar cittar paravikkoṇṭīr'*—"You praised the *Bhaktas* and *Siddhas*"—a topsy turvy act; for it is they who ought to praise). You are in their eyes and they contemplate on you in their mind so that they may see you: You (the Beyond) became enshrined in this earth placing the crescent moon (on your crown). And yet you stand enshrined in the vast expanse of space to enable Lords of the Heaven to embrace and praise you. What is this?" (4).

"The *Toṇṭars* serve you with flowers and pots of water. You choose one dance, perform it and sing a song and thus you bless them. Thus you are pleased with them. But you go to embrace the damsel keeping her always as one part of your body. (How to embrace her?). And yet forgetting all these loving servants and the loving damsel you commit the suicidal act of swallowing the poison and keeping it ever in your throat. What is this?" (5).

"In that hostile forest, the elephant came. You flayed its skin and yet as though in love with it you have covered yourself with its skin. You go a-begging (making love to those who give alms), in that inseparable company of the damsel and on the bull. What is this roaming about in all these contradictory ways?" (6).

"You dance for the sake of the loving *'Toṇṭars'* contemplating on you, but you dance surrounded by *Bhūtas* and yet the whole world praises you, Master Dancer! You are the righteousness; yet you are the eternal form of the music of the *yāḻ* (*Eḻil*—the instrument of seven strings). *Siddhas* or freed souls surround you whilst you roam reciting the *Vēdas* as though you were a student learning the *Vēdas*. What is this?" (7).

"Ah! The Lord of the mat-lock where mix all inimical things, the *kuravu*, the precious *koṉṟai*, the negligible *mattam*, the crescent moon, and its enemy the serpent and the damsel jealous of these two. You have been contradictory. (*'Viruttam'* may also mean, "You have been old in age or learning or morality"). My Lord, remove the blemishes inflicting me, who is contemplating on you (That the blemish should inflict one, contemplating on

Him is itself a contradiction. That is why the prayer is for removing it at once.). The damsel has been half of your body. Why frighten her by fighting with the elephant? What is this?" (8).

"You are in *Kacci* exhibiting its palaces, (the capital of the *Pallavas*), whilst out of certainty and firmness, people contemplate always on you and you reside in their hearts as the dancer singing in the forest. How is one to praise and worship you? *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* search for you and you exhibit the form of a fire impossible of approach. You roam about like this (full of contradictions). What is this?" (9).

III

This *hymn* is a *hymn* of inquiry and our poet describes it as such in the last verse. *Ārūraṉ, Toṇṭaṉ* and slave of *Tirunāvalūr* has asked "the Creator and Lord of contradictions, out of love, these queries". The answer also is implied in the interrogations. It is the great truth of the harmony of the Lord's love resolving all contradictions. Those who are capable of reciting these ten verses, of the garland of interrogations, in the way in which the truths are made clear therein are according to the upright—the perfect—the denizens of the Heaven of Bliss (The forest is really the heart as explained in our discussion of the Dance of *Śiva*) (10).

IV

Apart from the *purāṇic stories,* here we have some references to the methods of worship. The distinction between *Pattar* and *Cittar* we had already noticed. Worshipping the Lord with water and flowers is emphasized (5). "Contemplation by the *Bhaktas* on Him is referred to more than once (4, 7, 9) and the Lord dances therein, their heart. The song, music and dance are also ways of worshipping Him. He is the very form of the song and the very life of music, the eternal form of the music of the *yāḻ* of seven strings—or seven *svaras.* He is impossible to be reached —except through self-surrender, never through egotism and efforts of self conceit.

CHAPTER XLVIII

TIRUNANIPALLI

(*Hymn* 97)

I

Contradictions find solution in the love of the Lord. If the Absolute is everything, it cannot be otherwise. But this itself makes one despair of understanding fully or reaching the Lord. Before any such despair could spring, our poet sees the temple of *Naṉipaḷḷi* — where, the unapproachable has come to approach us. He is nearer there in that incarnation of beauty than anywhere else. The poet in this *hymn* emphasizes our Lord being beyond knowledge or thought (1, 3), beyond the reach of any one (5), the most subtle (8). *"Naṇṇum ūr Naṉipaḷḷiyatē"* — "The place He reaches is *Naṉipaḷḷi*." *"Naṇṇum ūr Naṉipaḷḷiyatē"* is the refrain of this *hymn*. The interrogations about the contradictions themselves suggested that these were resolved in his love and in this *hymn* the poet shows that love taking concrete form at *Naṉipaḷḷi* where He rushes to save us. The poet, therefore, to throw this concrete approachability of the Lord into bolder relief, describes by way of contrast the unapproachable aspects of the Lord.

II

The *purāṇic* references help him here as well. He is the Light unknown to *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* (1). He is the learned author of the *Vēdas* (1, 6) — the wearer of the sacred thread (6) and the Lord of that distant world (1). He is possessed of the vast space but He is the beggar possessing only a skull and a loin cloth (4). He is the powerful destroyer of the three cities (2), the destroyer of the sacrifice of *Dakṣa* (5), and the conqueror of *Rāvaṇa* (8) adorning Himself with the boar's tusk and the shell of the tortoise (9), the munificent patron giving the discus of his creation to *Viṣṇu* (5), and blessing the great *Pārtha* or *Arjuṇa* (6).

III

Apart from the *purāṇic* stories, there are philosophical implications which our poet suggests. The Lord is the Beginning (1).

He has given the extensive *Vēdas* full of all the words and their meaning (through which we could approach Him) (1). He has no relatives of His — no father or mother — but all the living beings of this world are his kith and kin (2). He is their father (1) — our Lord. He is perfect, without any defect (2), the Great and the Big, beyond the thoughts of our mind (3). But He becomes an atom, and contracted in the form of a fire spark he enters the body of flesh (3) — He is the Lord of the graveyard (4). But this country of the seven mountains surrounded by the seas is His (4) — He is our great man but of the form of a spark (or, a tail of a barley as the *Upaniṣad* will say) (3). He is the Lord entering the heart and then He expands all through (3). He is seated gloriously in the five-fold yields of the cow (in which the *Bhaktas* worship Him) (3). Ah! He is our patron. (1). Therefore, He is after all the wealth of mine (3). The poet speaks like a child — the speech of the nursery *Nāṉuṭai māṭu* — the child which has not distinguished 'I and my' — '*Nāṉ*' and '*Eṉ*'. It is impossible to reach Him but He reaches his place and this is *Naṉipaḷḷi* (5). He is the purest but He is a lover (*Viruppaṉ* — 6). He is our Lord (6). He is the most subtle principle but He is the rare and glorious medicine of nectar, all through our sevenfold births, one who removes our diseases and fetters — removing them in a subtle way (8). He is our patron blessing us (8). He is the Lord of Grace and mercy which shine with lustre and glory, as the *karma* of those contemplating on Him is erased and destroyed (8). He is beyond our mind (3) but yet He is the Lord who blessed that day that great *Ñāṉa Campantar with jñānam* or true knowledge, there at *Kāḻi* of no defects (9). *Ñāṉa Campantar* is the leader of *Ārūrar's* school of thought as we had pointed out elsewhere.

The Lord is time (10). His favourite day is *Ātirai* (*Ārdra*) (1), the star of dance visible to our eyes. Our poet, the *Ūraṉ* of the cool *Nāvalūr* contemplates all through his time every *nāḻikai* of it (*nāḻikai* is 24 minutes) on this *Naṉipaḷḷi,* the reservoir of God's love and on this beautiful form which the Lord has assumed there, for it is the Temple (*Uṟai kōil*) where He resides with His form. (7).

IV

Our poet gives expression to that bliss of contemplation in this garland of a *hymn*. When we think of this overflowing of His love — overflowing only to reach us and save us, who could think

of this world and its miseries? Our poet forgets at once this world and we are transported to the pure sphere of Higher Heavens of good and immense bliss, to stand dedicated to *Tapas* and Service in that sphere. Our poet assures that those who value his '*hymn* high and recite it, will experience this higher spiritual life of divine bliss and service (10).

V

The holy place is also described in one place. He is very near all. It is the *Tiru Naṉipaḷḷi* — the holy or wealthy or beautiful city. It is the place where *Antaṇars* rear up everywhere, the sacred three fires, (7) and through them the *Vēdic* sacrifices as well as the *Vēdas* and their six *aṅgas* (adjuncts of *Vēdic* knowledge, *etc.*) (7). But it is not unapproachable to lower beings — the red carps, the tiny fish — rush into the fields of that divine city. (7) (*Ōtiyaṉ* is a peculiar form — (1)).

CHAPTER XLIX

TIRUNIṈṞIYŪR

(*Hymn* 65)

I

In the previous *hymns*, the memory of the great *Bhaktas* of Tamil Land whom the Lord blessed with His Love, has been growing in force and emphasis :— *c.f. Taṇṭi Aṭikaḷ* in *hymn* No. 72: 10 and *Ñāṉa Campantar* in *hymn* No. 97 : 9. The lives of these great men give the best illustrations of the Lord's love — an effective answer for all the searchings of our heart and brain. The greatest message of *Nampi Ārūrar* is that this love of the Lord is there to save every human being — even the sinners and the lowest of the low. The worst sinners are the first concern of the Lord.

II (a)

Human beings alone are sometimes considered by most of the philosophers, as capable of salvation. But the folklore looks upon every living being even the insects and the plants as speaking a divine language of their own praising the Lord and reaching His feet. This philosophy of the man in the street, appeals to our poet and he narrates further the stories of the *purāṇas* which, because of this message had appealed to him, almost effecting a conversion of his heart, inspiring it to take refuge in the feet of God with confidence that divine love which saved so many will not leave him in the lurch. The insect of a spider served the Lord in its own way — putting up a canopy of a cobweb what others will laugh at. But the Lord realized as only He could and conferred on its next birth as *Kō-c-ceṅkaṇāṉ,* munificence and an empire of great power and skill. This is the story of the *Cōḻa* King *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*. "This word of mouth, describing this story I have heard and I have taken refuge in your feet" (1).

II (b)

Not only the insect but the animals were also saved. "The cow waking up before the rays of sun, (or before the rise of the sun — the great flame), carrying its milking vessels of its udders,

bathed you raining the milk and thus followed your feet. I heard this word of mouth-history and got it firmly implanted in my heart. I praised you and contemplated on you. Thus breaking away from my fetters, O, the Supreme, I took refuge in your feet" (4):

"The elephant of the four tusks shook (in fright on his enemies). But as soon as it praised your feet of goodness or beauty, (not only was its fear removed but also) it was blessed with the unique greatness and grandeur of the Heavens. I heard of this characteristic feature of yours and took refuge in your feet of gold" (7).

II (c)

"Is that all?—All the beings were saved—even the cruel and wicked beings doing harm. The vision is of the silent Teacher under the banyan tree expounding the *Aṟam* or *Dharma* as *Pacupati* surrounded by all the living beings—the concentrated *yōgis,* the *Kiṉṉaras,* the tiger, the biting serpent, the uncontrollable lion, the blotless ascetics—all those that had done harm one way or the other" (6).

II (d)

(The lion, the tiger and the serpent are harmful; *Kātupottar* are sometimes spoken of as *Rākṣasas; Kiṉṉaras* are potentially harmful with their power used against their enemies; the ascetics are harmful with their powers of curse; (but there is no story of their using this power. It may be that their father *Brahma,* the Creator, was disappointed at their complete renunciation—thus proving harmful to him). It is the delay caused by this exposition of the Teacher to this group that withheld the Lord from the Mother thereby making the whole world fruitless in that way; the whole of this group may be taken to have done this harmful act. *"Ētam ceytavar"* is how the beginning words of the third line of verse No. 6 should be read, because this gives the line the beauty of alliteration; whilst if it is read as *"Vēdam ceytavar"* 'those who have given the *Vēdas*', this beauty is spoiled and the resulting meaning is also wrong; for they are not the authors of the *Vēdas.* The reading adopted by us makes the message of *Ārūrar* very clear—the message of *Ārūrar* which he has expressed elsewhere that the Lord blesses us even when we commit faults. Is it not the sinner going powerless, down the inclined plane that deserves all the help and love of the Lord?). The word *'ētam'* in the term *'Ētam ceytavar'* is also interpreted by some as goodness.

II (e)

Some of the saints whose lives at first sight appear to be swerving from the right path (as he had mentioned—*Hymn* 55:4), come to our poet's mind—*Caṇḍi*, cutting the feet of the father and being blessed with beautiful garments, ornaments, garlands and food of the Lord, *Tirunāvukkaraiyar*, an erstwhile heretic singing his seven hundred, comparable only to themselves, and *Kaṇṇappar* carrying the cruel arrow—"Hankering after the sweet Grace of your love which these have received, I have taken refuge" (2).

"*Parasurāma* of the *Purāṇic* fame wreaking his vengeance on 21 generations of kings held aloft the befitting water vessels of gold and gems and gave away 360 *vēli* lands and 300 *Vēdic* scholars, stating that this ever growing city of *Niṉṟiyūr* is yours. You have showed him your feet. I have realized this rule of yours—showering blessings on the erstwhile sinners once they approach with the converted mind. I have taken refuge in you" (3).

The greatest blessing conferred on *Agastyar* comes to our poet's mind along with the mercy showed to *Indra*. "*Indra* came and worshipped. You were pleased and you blessed him saying, 'You do rule the Heavens'. At the three points of the day—morning, midday and evening—establishing the immobile *liṅga* of the Lord and creating for the Lord this form, *Agastya* worshipped and fell at your feet. You blessed him with the permanent residence at *Tiruppotiyil* beautified by the invaluable gems falling out from the water-falls. Realizing this great wealth of your blessing, I have taken refuge in you" (5).

III

Unfortunately we have only seven verses left of this *hymn*. The poet describes this Holy place. Like all great men and poets, he is fond of the children even as the Lord is fond of the spiritual weaklings. The river of gold—*Kāviri* in its flood thrusts aside many gems while the many teams of children, going about in the midst of their games, gather these in the streets, in the raised platforms and the front yard of their houses (1). The city gives away these pearls levelled up equally with pure gold (4). It is the city of wealth where abides the goddess of wealth seated on the cool and red commodious lotus (5).

It is also a city of learning and worship and beauty. It is a city of that wealth worshipped by *Cittar*, *Vāṉavar* and *Tāṉavar*—

all the varieties of supernatural beings (3). It is the city where the perfect fame of the righteous *Vēdic* scholars shines all round the world (6). The damsels of crescent like forehead, glisten and move in every palace and tower, like the pea-hen, the young ones of the deer and the parrot reminding these respectively with their beautiful tresses of hair, with their darting eyes and with their sweet speech (7). They speak words of Tamilian love and the parrots learn them—these beautiful *Tamil* full of the theme of love (2).. That is the wealth of the city of the dancing of women, Brahmins, children and parrots and angels—all forming the Democracy of the divine community consisting of *Agastya, Tirunāvukkaracar, Kaṇṇappar, Kōcceṅkaṇān, Campantar,* insects, tigers, lions, *Kinnaras,* saints, elephants, cows and parrots.

CHAPTER L

TIRUNINṞIYŪR

(*Hymn* 19)

I

This *hymn* is not mentioned in *Periyapurāṇam*. We have suggested that this *hymn* may belong to *Tiruniṉṟavūr* of *Pūcalār*. The pattern of the stanzas is like that of *hymn* No. 72. Unlike the swift moving trot of that *hymn* (72) this *hymn* is in a longer metre which can be scanned as a *'Kaṭṭaḷaikkalitturai'* of modern times, moving like the dignified march of the horse in a royal procession, a slow and steady march of four short steps (metrical feet) and a longer step (metrical foot)—a uniformity which is not always observed in a *Kaṭṭaḷaikkalitturai*. Therefore, in this metre we have room for more words; instead of *'Iṭam Valampuramē'* in the former *hymn* (72), we have here, *'Iṭamāvatu nam Tiruniṉṟiyūrē'* (1, 2, 5, 8), or *"Iṭamām Tiruniṉṟiyūrē"* (4, 6, 7, 9). There are some variations for example in verse 3, *'Iṭamvaḷa malkupuṉal ceṅkayal pāyum vayal poliyum Tiru niṉṟiyūrē'* and in 10, *'Ūr Tiru niṉṟiyūrē'*.

The cataract-like speed of the previous *hymn* (72) changes here; the metre here flows like a slow moving useful river, revealing a greater repose, more like a message to the world than a subjective exclamation. There are less of endstopped lines, the idea flowing with emphasis flowing from one line into the next. Otherwise what we have stated with reference to the other *hymn* applies to this *hymn*.

II

The *purāṇic* descriptions of the company of the Mother (1), the destruction of the three cities (1), the shrine of *koṉṟai* (2), the sacred ash (2), the trident (3), the feast of poison (3), the love of the *ṣadaṅgas* and music and books, the Lordship of the *Vēdas* (4), the bull (4), the *Ganges* (4), the serpent (6), the garment of tiger's skin (6), the covering of elephant's skin (6), *Brahma Kapāla* (6), the *begging* (7), the eight mat-locks (7), the dance (7), the conquest of Death (8), and the worship by *Brahma, Viṣṇu* and *Indra* are all referred to (9).

III

The relationship of the Lord to his *Bhaktas* stands foremost in the mind of the poet. He is thoroughly theirs. Many love Him as the Supreme of the Supreme (1). He does not come near the deceitful minds (5). He has accepted as His permanent abode, the minds of those taking refuge in Him (5). Has not the poet told us in the previous *hymn* (65) that he has taken refuge in Him? His lovers of cool and equipoised mind revel in the surrender of their six passions and in their worship with flowers and He loves their worship (8). They think with their mind and out of the fullness of the heart, their mouth is full of Him (10). He is ever on their tongue. To them He is purer than the rare *tapas* or a sacrifice (10). He is far away from those who had gone away from Him and near unto those who are dedicated to His feet (10). He is the great fame. He is the auspicious (10), good of goodness or *Śiva* (11). He is fond of the acts and the conduct of those who love His feet (5). The references here reveal to us the mode of worship with music (4, 8), *Vēdas* (4) and Books (4) flower (8) and *mantras* (9), sacred ash (10) and the five fruits of the cow (5), suppressing the six passions and taking refuge in Him (8). Fame comes to these *Toṇṭars* (11).

IV

There is also a personal reference. We had often referred to *Campantar* as the leader of *Ārūrar's* school of *Śaivism.*[1] In this *hymn* occur the words *"Pukalinnakar pōṟṟum em puṇṇiyattār nēcattiṉāl eṉṉai āḷum koṇṭār"* (2). It is usually interpreted as referring to the Lord as the virtuous Being honouring the city of *Pukali* and as the great Lord saving the poet out of love. *"Pukali"* was the birth place of *Campantar.* The virtuous being, honouring or worshipping at *Pukali* may be interpreted as referring to *Campantar.* The next part of the verse will then mean that out of His love for *Campantar* the Lord had saved *Ārūrar.*

V

The Lord is here to save all. He is the Lord of this country surrounded by the long and wide expanse of the sea (3), reminding us of *Ārūrar's* description of the empire of *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ.*[2] The Lord loves all the eight points of the compass (8). He is Time and the Sun (a measurer of time) (9).

1. 7: 39: 5. 2. 7: 39: 9.

VI

Tiruniṉṟiyūr or *Tiruniṉṟavūr* is a Heaven on earth (It is *Śivagati*—11)—with the waters of increasing fertility, the *kayal* fish rushing to the fields—the poet has not more to say (3). It is a place where the activities of the famous *Toṇṭars* never cease (11). Having experienced the place as *Śivagati,* our poet assures the readers that those who are masters of this *hymn* will be in communion with the Lord, worshipped by this Earth and the Heaven (11).

CHAPTER LI

TIRU NĪṬŪR

(*Hymn* 56).

I

The subjective experience becomes objectified as a message pointing out the holy place of our refuge. This *hymn* continues it to the next stage of emphasizing the worship which is another name for taking refuge in the Lord, "Is it proper or possible to leave Him without falling at His feet?"—"*Paṇiyāviṭalāmē?*"—this is the refrain of this *hymn.*

II

The poet himself states that this is a garland of a *hymn* of his loving cry to the Lord, a cry of his heart, loving to see the feet of his patron and fall at His feet (11). As usual, we can take the assurance he gives the readers of the *hymn* as an expression of his experience whilst singing this *hymn* (11). The Lord has become enshrined here for us all. Those who could bow down before Him enshrined in every city of this world are certain of becoming His *Bhaktas* and sure of attaining salvation (11).

III

In keeping with the progressive objectification pointed out, the poet describes the natural beauty of this holy place as well, unlike in the previous two *hymns*. The holy place offers a feast to our five senses—a divine feast inasmuch as the scenery is a divine vision leading us to the Lord and to His mercy objectified in that scenery instead of the five senses misleading us into the temptations of the world. The fertility of the place full of waters in the fields (promising a sweet feast of paddy) attracts our attention as much as the rich and fruitful Grace of the Lord (1). The fields circumambulate the place as it were. The sugarcanes, bringing to our memory the blocks of sugar-candy, grow tall and full of juice all round this place, a great feast for our taste and our tongues (7). In these fields of water—so tempting us all to bathe, a feast to our tactual senses—bathe and dance, glisten and

jump the fish in all joy—ah! the waters themselves dance in this city of great Dance Master (3). There is a feast to the eyes and to the ears—a feast of art full of spiritual value to our imagination. The hall of dance and concert is the garden with the overhanging clouds. The *koels* sing and cry and by their side the glorious peacocks dance with the swans—all these movements of the dance ending slowly in the ripples of the water (4). *Puṉṉai* and *mātavi* shoot out their flowers (2). When all light ceases and it is all dark, then also shines the glory of the Lord (3); the jasmine blooms in the quiet of the night spreading out its all pervasive sweet fragrance all round the place a feast to a most primitive sense of the nose (10).

IV

The *purāṇic* stories also come in, harmonized with this colourful and rich nature—the white bull (1), the vertical eye in the forehead (1), the blue throat (1), the mat-lock with the crescent (2), the trident (3), the fire in the hand (7), the *Katvāṅga* (7), the sacred thread (7), the ear-ring (7), the skull (7), the elephant's skin (10), the dance and the song of the forest (6), the *Vēdas* (4), the conquest of Death (6), the game of hide and seek played with *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (6) and the hunter coming to bless *Arjuna* (2) and the Lord of the Trinity (5).

V

Our poet gives expression to his own experience of the Lord. "He is the Supreme beyond everything" (5), "the Great Dancer" (6), "the King" (8), "the Beautiful" (10), "the All Powerful" (11). "He is the Lord whom even I love" (10). "He is our patron whom we every day honour and love" (3). "He is so happy with His followers" (10). "He makes us receive His Grace devoid of all miseries" (3). Our poet gives expression to his experience in the form of universal truth about the Lord. "The Lord is the purest" (11). "He is devoid of all blots or faults who has renounced completely the five sensations", an idea which *Kuṟaḷ* also emphasizes (5), as *"Poṟivāyil aintavittāṉ"*. "He is so sweet to speak about, He with His thousands of names" (11). "He is sweeter than the education we have received" (5). "He is fond of *Nīṭūr,* for blessing us all therein" (11). "He removes all our miseries and saves us all" (10). "He is the sweetest and the most blissful removing all our afflictions—the destroyer of all

the chronic and ancient *karmas*" (8). "He is the Lord of indestructable great fame" (7). "He is the nectar unto those who take refuge in Him" (10). "He is near unto those who are good (or, an ornament to them)" (10), "indifferent unto those who are indifferent unto Him" (2). "He is difficult of approach to the egotists but easy of reach to those whose conscience is clear and to those who hanker after Him for a sight of His" (5). "He is the path of purity" (4), "He who shows us well the Path" (3). "If the followers become faultless He grants them a communion with Him" (5). "He is all in all and All Powerful bringing the diseases so that the egotists' soul may through that experience of diseases fall down exhausted to take refuge in Him, when He at once will destroy their chronic *Karmas*" (8). "Yes! He is the Creator of this body and all the illusions" (8). "He creates us all, not to become fettered" (8). "He is the Creation and Destruction" (4). "He becomes the Powerful wind and the Fire to destroy the world, to give it rest" (8). "It is again He, who destroys the delusions of the mind and who shines as the great intelligence within our mind", (8) "removing all our attachments and our *kārmic* relationships inspiring us to sing of this praise and dance in joy" (6).

CHAPTER LII

TIRUKKŌLAKKĀ

(*Hymn* 62)

I

This is a *hymn* describing, according to *Cēkkiḻār,* the vision our poet had at this holy place of *Tirukkōlakkā,* probably because every verse herein ends with the words, "I have seen the Lord at *Kōlakkā*" even as our poet has described his vision of "*Kaḻumalam*" or "*Cīkāḻi*" by stating "*Kaḻumala vaḷanakark kaṇṭukoṇṭēṉē*" (*H.* 58). It is thus clear *Cēkkiḻār* considers this *hymn* as of great importance. If it is a description of a vision, this *hymn* must be taken to be expressing our poet's experience of God as confirming the esoteric message of the *Purāṇas.*

"The Lord is the great prop to those who fall at His feet, this Lord of the elements (or, the souls), One who has become so easy of reach unto our poet. He is the Lord adorning Himself with the serpents of the anthills—so easy of reach to them, but He is impossible of approach to the rest as we see Him destroying the three cities"—This is the substance of the first verse showing us how the poet who feels his own subjective experience of the Lord confirms the truths of the *Purāṇas.* It is in these terms the other verses also have to be interpreted.

II

The Mother's company (2), the crescent moon on the mat-lock (2), the shawl of an elephant's skin (2), the garment of the tiger's skin (3), the three eyes (3), the Lordship over the eternals (4), the great *Dēvas* (4), the fatherhood over *Kumāra* (4), the hidden *Ganges* (4), the bull (6), the form of fire (6), the conquest of Death on behalf of *Mārkkaṇḍēya* (6), the begging with the *Brahma kapāla* (7), the *koṉṟai* (7), the dance with the *bhūtas* (8), the crushing down of *Rāvaṇa* and bestowing gifts because of his song (9), becoming invisible to *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* (9)—are all mentioned in this *hymn.*

III

"He is the Lord of the *bhūtas* (1), the great and pure prop to His followers easy of reach unto me, as the great destroyer of sins, though impossible of approach to others" (1). "He is all knowledge of the books, the *Vēdas* and the *aṅgas* which are His forms" (2). "He is the music of poetry" (3). "He is sweet as the love of the heart of *Bhaktas*" (3). "He shines in the acts of the *Dēvas* of the world (Brahmins), our Lord, the Lord of mine, His servant" (3). "He is pleased to save me and accept me with confidence as His servant" (4). "The great *Śiva*" (4), "the rich honey" (4), "He, who came that day in the presence of the people of this wide world to accept me as His servant after producing the deed of slavery, only to disappear all of a sudden at *Tiruveṇṇeinallūr*" (5), "that great bunch of pearls" (5), "He who had decided to confer salvation" (5). "He stands as wind, the fire and water, the great transcendent principle, the meaning and significance of all perfect arts and knowledge" (6), "the great flame shining like a great light" (7), "the very idea of the mind" (8), "He, who has become the head, the eye, the mouth, the ear, the nose and the whole body to remove, as my Lord, all the cruel *karmas*" (9). "He is the Lord whose characteristic feature it is to sympathize with the song of *Ñāṉa Campantar* who spread *Tamiḻ* every day through his sweet music and to bless him with the cymbal in the presence of the people of this world" (8)— That is how our poet is describing the Lord of the vision emphasizing thus the Lord's Grace to the *Bhaktas*, His form of knowledge, His form of poetry and music, His omnipresence, all intended to cure us of our chronic *karma* and to confer salvation. Our poet's experience as usual is thus expressed as a subjective fact and objective truth.

IV

Our poet again as usual emphazies the bliss of the Lord as his sweetest experience of honey (4), as something precious as the bunch of pearls (5). This holy place is full of the reminiscences of his leader *Ñāṉa Campantar* and our poet describes the incident of *Campantar* getting the *tāḷam* (cymbal) (8). Our poet also describes how he had himself been saved by the Lord (4, 5). He is reminded of the *Tillai* dance (4), of the great temple of *Kōḷili* (8), where our poet prayed for the Lord's help for transporting the grains (*H.* 20) and of *Veṇṇeinallūr* where our poet was saved (5).

Śiva is the name of the Lord which *Śaivites* cherish in their heart and our poet mentions that word in this *hymn* (4). Above all, our poet describes the Lord as the most precious gem of a master or *Guru* (4).

V

Our poet suggests here as elsewhere the worship of Lord through *Vēdic mantras* and rites (2), through music (3), through dance (3, 4, 8), through art (6) and through the realization of God everywhere in the universe (8, 9) and inside the temple (8). The *Bhaktas* are described by our poet as embodiments of truth, honour and poetry (10)—these belong to the beautiful community of *Bhaktas*—an idea which we often compared with what *Periyāḻvār* calls as *'Toṇṭakkulam'*. Our poet speaks of the path he has followed in this *hymn* as that path which is already known to the people as the path of love wherein the whole world out of love stands with His heart melting in sympathy and love (10).

VI

In this *hymn,* the poet has emphazised the bliss, the precious beauty of light and love of the great divine dance (7). Having experienced the Lord thus, our poet assures his readers that they will reach the goal of the great Dancer of the forest (burning-ghat) as their own city. (10).

VII

The beauty of the place fits in with the harmony of divine Grace. It is a place where flock the people of this world and the other from the Heavens (2). It is *Kōlakkā,* the beautiful spot, sweet with the fragrance of the *kurā* flower of the gardens where go in procession as it were the pollen dust (2). It is a place of rich fields full of water in the tanks (3)—this most beautiful place of fields where jump and frisk about the monkeys (9).

CHAPTER LIII

TIRUKKURUKĀVŪR

(*Hymn* 29)

I

This is the *hymn* on *Kurukāvūr* where the temple is called *Veḷḷaṭai* (10). This is an outpouring of the poet's heart. The *hymn* is so surcharged with personal emotion that there is not any reference to the *purāṇic* description of the Lord except to the Lord's going a-begging with the skull (3), besmearing Himself with the white ash (5), and adorning Himself with the *koṉṟai* (5) to dance on the burning ghat in the midnight (3)—a conception that appeals to the heart of our poet.

In the last verse the poet speaks of the Lord as residing at *Kurukāvūr Veḷḷaṭai* (10). In the other nine verses, he seems to be identifying the holy place with the Lord Himself—*"Kurukāvūr Veḷḷaṭai nī aṉṟē"* which is the burden of this *hymn*. Of course, it is possible to interpret this phrase *"Veḷḷaṭai nī aṉṟē"* so as to mean "Are you not of this place Veḷḷaṭai?".

II

He looks upon this holy place as a place in the very Heavens *"Viṇṇiṭai-k kurukāvūr"* — *"Kurukāvūr* within the Heavens" (6). The *kayal* fish rush into the ponds, and in the tanks, whose every sluice, the various kinds of water flowers *kāvi, kuvaḷai,* lotus and *ceṅkaḻunīr* are fond of (2). This idea of the flowers hankering after the holy place is again repeated — the water lilies and jasmine are fond of the tank of budding flowers (5). The beautiful and shining blue lily grows high in the pond of flowers. In harmony with this beauty, shines the young swan of beautiful gait. This becomes the great truth of the holy place — its beauty (4). It is the beautiful place of shining light surrounded by fields and gardens full of fertility (10).

III

His own personal experience of the Lord as usual is expressed with reference to his particular vision as well, as in general as

universal truths, true of all *Bhaktas.* "Ah!. My Lord! I have not understood this — your becoming all this to me. All others speak of you as a mad man. You are the precious pearl, the gem of carbuncle" (1). (We have already noticed our poet's partiality for *māṇikkam,* the carbuncle). "You have protected my soul from getting lost; you have accepted me as your servant and saved me" (2). "You have saved me from fever and all other diseases" (4). "You have saved me from the coming scandals" (5). "You could not bear my mortal pains and you have come in to save me; if the servants of the Lord of Death come in to inflict pains I know of none but you" (7). "Even if it comes to a question of death, you have saved me, you, my king, from all such miseries" (7). "Even if the angry, noisy and powerful servants of the Lord of Death come to confuse me and make me perturbed, you will prevent all those cruel miseries inflicting me" (8).

IV

Coming to the general statements or universal truths, which are, after all, another way of expressing his own subjective feelings, the poet speaks of the Lord as appeasing the hunger of those who sing of Him and of curing all the diseases of all those who praise Him (3). "The Lord is there at *Kurukāvūr* for preventing mental distress rushing on His followers in this world" (6). "He removes the darkness, confusion or delusion in the minds of His followers who never go astray, or who never get perturbed" (8). "You, my Lord, make us your servants without our going to fall at the feet of many" (9). You roam about wearing the skin whilst you make us adorn ourselves with silk and gold". (9). "You allow others to get themselves ruined releasing them thoroughly from your golden feet devoid of all evils" (others have taken this '*viṭuvippāy*' to mean release me thoroughly to get attached to your golden feet) (9).

You are like the *Tamiḻ* song in music compositions; you are like the sweet taste in the fruits; you are like the apple of the eye; you are like a flame in the midst of dense darkness" (6).

V

The descriptions of the personal experience of the poet suggest that our poet escaped, thanks to his reliance on the Lord, mental and physical afflictions following undeserved political vilification. Or, these descriptions should be taken as of troubles, diseases and scandals overtaking ordinary men in general.

Periyapurāṇam speaks of this *hymn* having been sung when the Lord came as a Brahmin to feed our hungry and thirsty poet, on his way to *Tirukkurukāvūr*. But more than this is meant in this *hymn* as suggested by us. Our poet has sung this *hymn* when God has saved him from all the afflictions and when the troubled heart has become cool and calm. *Campantar* gives a secret of his poetry that he sings of the Lord when his mind is calm and cool — "*Uḷaṅkuḷirntapōtelām ukantukanturaippaṇē*.[1] Walking closely in the footsteps of *Campantar*, our poet calls this *hymn* as "*Uḷam kuḷir tamiḻ mālai*" — 'the *Tamiḻ* garland of cool heart' (10). This *hymn* is an exclamation of a loving heart representing the speech of all *Bhaktas*—that is what our poet tells us. He is also a *Bhakta*, a relative that way of the Lord, only the very last and youngest '*iḷaṅkiḷai*' (10). This *hymn* must belong to the age of his political pre-occupation; he calls himself the father of *Vaṉappakai* and, therefore, must have sung — after his marriage (10).

1. 2: 98: 9.

CHAPTER LIV

TIRUKKAḺIPPĀLAI

(*Hymn* 23)

I

This *hymn* is one of our poet's exclamations of joy at the sight of God's Grace overflowing towards him. Sometimes the exclamations are addressed to the Lord, sometimes to the world at large. In a few places, out of the fullness of his heart the poet simply stops with the *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord. Thus this *hymn* is a kind of overflowing from the previous *hymn*.

II

The first verse seems to answer a question which his own conscience as a representative of the world raises: "How can the Lord save you, you, the author of so many past cruel *karmas?*" Our poet replies, "I am bad and because of my evil *karmas,* I get confused and desperate. Even after seeing this sorry plight of mine, is it fair for the Lord to leave me desperately alone, without expressing any sympathy in such terms as 'Alas! My slave!' He is the father of the prodigal son as well as the upright son and loves both alike even as His mat-lock brings together the crescent and serpent to sleep together. That is the beautiful and harmonious form of His. This is the only place *Kaḻippālai* which He loves most" — That is the first verse.

In the second verse the poet addresses the Lord, "I may be anywhere and from there, if I, your slave, think of you, you come there, become one with me to stand there to shower your blessings, to cut me away from the shackles of *karma* here and now and to save me, O, Lord of the *Ganges*! (who saved many for the sake of *Bhagīratha*) you love this holy place *Kaḻippālai*" (2).

"You have punished me; the excesses, I, your slave, committed out of your love, you have forgiven all. You have taken this dog of yours as something significant and made me contained within you. Yes! that is your nature! Your throat has become blue because you have feasted on the poison of the seas, never conscious of that fact"

"'The bees hum and the flowers bloom; gathering these, your followers shower them on you; tears of love unceasingly drip, from their eyes — these speak the state of the loving heart. Along with them, I perform these acts of love. No other God have I loved with my heart except thyself, O, Lord! that art fond of this holy place of *Kaḻippālai* of fields full of the sweet sugar-cane (sweet like your love unto them)" (4).

"You may remove my *karmas;* You may love them. You may hate and out of love you may rant or hector me. You may smite me. You are possessed of the deed of sale (of my slavery). I am completely yours. The solid bead disappearing inside the back-waters is carried on to the streets of the holy place by the sea. So can you hold me aloft even when I reach the very depths of misery, you who hold up the fire in your hand, as though to burn away all our faults" (5).

III

The poet at the realization of the love of the Saviour loses himself in the description of the Lord. "The skin of the tiger is on your waist and you tighten it up with the dancing serpent. You cover yourself with the elephant's skin in spite of its bad smell. So do you love us in spite of our faults; you protect us, we who are in your service. The *karmas* disappear at your sight. With that ideal, you have enshrined yourself in this holy place of no fault. This is *Kaḻippālai*" (6).

"You have flayed the elephant's skin as though it were a fine cloth. The whole world worships you. You set fire to the three cities with the intention of removing the miseries of the *Dēvas* (You are the Lord of all, praised by all, destroying all obstructions, make your followers happy)" (7).

"You have created all this world. You destroyed the sacrifice of *Dakṣa*. You share the body of the Mother and yet you have the mat-lock of an ascetic. You have crushed *Rāvaṇa,* O, Thou, who art fond of *Kaḻippālai,* where the fields lie near the seas!" (8).

"God is the Lord of *Dēvas* shining like an inflickering and permanent light of truth inside the mind of those who praise Him with the tongue knowing no falsehood. He is unknown to the red coloured (*Brahma*) and to the black coloured (*Viṣṇu*). He is happy with the collyrium eyed damsel" (9).

"The Lord is the Supreme being, the *Paramēṭṭi*, whose fame knows no blot. He loves this holy place of *Kaḻippālai* full of the wealth of the back-waters" (10).

The poet *Ārūrar*, the Lord of *Nāvalūr*, worships Him and he has composed this faultless *Tamiḻ* garland. Those who are masters of this *hymn* will rule the world of the people of the Heavens (10).

IV

These exclamations of this *hymn* are the essence of a divine life and hence this assurance of our poet, that his readers will rule the Heavens (10).

V

The poet has described the holy place as being full of the wealth of the back-waters, the dashing sea and fields of paddy and sugar-cane, all with a divine significance of their own. He has also referred to the *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord which emphasize further his own experience of the Saviour. This *hymn* reveals our poet's feeling of self-surrender and the joy of release he has experienced thereby.

PART V

TO THE NORTH

Introduction

I

These *hymns* belong to the temples north of the *Cōḻa* country. They form a continuous whole with the previous group as relating to the period of our poet's northern tour. We noticed our poet describing the Lord as the remover of the scandal. Perhaps this refers to some political trouble which probably sent our poet northward. The *Nāvalūr hymn* occurring as the first in the group may belong to the first part itself. The three *hymns* giving us a list of the temples, as emphasizing the temple cult is included in this part.

II

The burden as it were of these songs consists in these exclamations: "The place of the Lord who had saved me at *Veṇṇeinallūr* is *Tirunāvalūr,* the place of *Naracinkamunaiyaraiyaṉ*" (H. 17); "To get rid of your sins, faults and shallow knowledge, O, Ye people! worship at *Kaḻukkuṉṟam,* which is the place of the Lord residing in the heart of His faultless followers" (*H.* 81); "O, Lord! Is that love of your going about begging for us, same as this way of saving me? I shall not forget you. Just think of those who think of you. Is it fair that you should beg making your followers miserable over that?" (*H.* 41); "I shall not praise any one but you" (*H.* 21); "You do not do anything for us; You go about begging" (a humorous remark of the damsel to *Bhikṣāṭana*) (*H.* 5); "This is the place of the Lord of this activity and that" (*H.* 10); "Of what worth is their prop, their experience, their speech, their worship, their company, their knowledge, their thought or their love, of those who do not think of Him? (*H.* 86); "I shall not knowingly praise any one except you, my Lord!" (*H.* 26); "*Cīparppatam* is the rendezvous of the deer, etc." (*H.* 79); "O, Ye people who suffer in this world, pronounce the word '*Kētāram*" (*H.* 78); "His place or temple is at *Oṟṟiyūr* on the beach" (*H.* 91); "Bless me, O, Lord! to sing of you, to see you, to experience and enjoy you who removes the miseries of your

followers who reach you leaving off their usual watch, over their bodies" (*H.* 12, 31, 47).

III

The goal to be reached as pointed in the last verses is the breaking down of the bondage of *karma,* the reaching of *Śivalōka, Paralōka, Viṇṇulakam, Vāṉakam* — the Heavens, to be one with the Lord and the destruction of sin and all faults. *Śivalōka* is the place where flock and sing the followers, those who worship the Lord singing the *hymns,* those who reside on our head worthy of our worship. They are cool, happy and calm.

IV

Nature is too much in evidence in this part. Nature is identified with the Lord, for instance, *Tirupparuppatam.* The temple cult of pilgrimage is clearly brought out. The holy places are a Heaven of beasts, birds and plants, perhaps all reminding us of the human life — another vision of the universe as a happy family of the Lord. The descriptions of the places sometimes are with reference to the worship of *Bhaktas,* their conch, their music and their festivals. Even the bees circumambulate the Lord. These descriptions sometimes have an esoteric meaning — the sleep of the bees being on a par with the rest given to the soul after what is called destruction. There can be here no poetry of world negation when Nature is thus looked upon as the Lord Himself. The condemnation of the world is justified when one forgets this happy vision and gets lost in the trap of common women and the passing show of delusion.

V

The Lord is described as *Nāvalar* or Orator.[1] This is a unique description coming from the heart of a politician and poet who must have known the mighty powers and bewitching charms of oratory. Another phrase is "*Aṭṭapuyaṅkap pirāṉ*".[2] Always insisting on the escape from *Karma,* our poet describes the Lord as the Medicine for the *karma.* The path of *Jñāna* is emphasized. Our poet is fond of describing God as the Flame of the Light — the eye of knowledge. He is the only reality — '*Meypporuḷ*'. He is the Supreme *Paramaṉ* — *Śiva* and the *Guru.* He is imma-

1. See *Vāyāṭi,* 7: 17: 8.
2. 7: 10: 7.

nent and transcendental. He is all sorts of relationships. He is all love to those who take refuge in Him — those who know no deceit. He is full of mercy, full of forbearance. He is nectar, insatiable nectar — *Ārā amudu* — a favourite term with the *Vaiṣṇavites*. The *'mārjāra kisōranyāya'*, the way of the cat, comes out when our poet asserts that the Lord saved him even when he was false and that thereafter he became fearless.

VI

The *Bhikṣāṭana* form continues to be the main art motif and we have humorous slings at the Lord. The esoteric significance of the deer and the bull as the *Vēdas* and *Praṇava* respectively is also given.

VII

The followers of the Lord are faultless and deceitless; they are as good as the Lord deserving our worship. Their congregation and choir, form the *Śivalōka*. Worship with *Pañcagavya*, *hymns*, praises of the Lord, music, contemplation, self-surrender, love, concentration and manual services are all mentioned. Worshipping at the various temples and bathing in the holy rivers, and waters are emphasized but what is important for the blotless Lord of purity is not the outward but internal purity and love. Worship at dawn is specifically referred to. Our poet refers to *Ñāna Campantar, Caṇḍēśvarar* and *Naraciṅkamuṉai araiyaṉ*.

VIII

Our poet in all humility refers to himself as *Aṭittoṇṭaṉ* — the slave of His feet. He describes his own round shoulders. He is a great scholar, *pulavar* and a great orator of good words; a description of the Lord as an orator becomes thus significant. Our poet refers to the death of his parents. Therefore, these *hymns* can be assigned to the latter period of his life — a life of political complication, of poetry and oratory and of pilgrimage.

CHAPTER LV

TIRUVEṆṆEI NALLŪR AND TIRUNĀVALŪR

(*Hymn* 17)

I

In the previous *hymn* the poet was giving expression to his joy at the special Grace the Lord bestowed on him. Therein he stated that he was a bond slave of the Lord. This idea is made clearer in this *hymn,* when our poet goes to *Tirunāvalūr,* the place of his patron and foster father, *Naraciṅkamuṉai Araiyaṉ* (10). It is not clear why this was not referred to in such graphic way in the earlier *hymns.* One wonders whether this *hymn* may not belong to the previous period of our poet's life. Though the *hymn* was sung at *Nāvalūr,* the poet speaks of *Tiruveṇṇeinallūr* where the poet has been saved as the bond slave of the Lord. It is in this *hymn* that we get the detailed version about this episode. The pattern of the sentence is as follows: "The place of the God of the *Purāṇas* who saved me at *Tiruveṇṇei Nallūr* is *Tirunāvalūr".* Usually the third line refers to the *Tiruveṇṇai Nallūr* incident in the words, *"Veṇṇei Nallūril vaitteṉṉai āḷum koṇṭa"* (but see verses 2, 3, 6 and 10 where the incident is referred to in the second line). The fourth line ends with the words, *"Iṭamāvatu nam Tirunāvalūr".* The metre and the tune are the same as that of *hymn* No. 19.

II

The *purāṇic* stories about the destruction of the three cities (1), the riding on the bull (3, 4), the company of the Mother (3), the love of *Kāḷi* of *Kōtikkarai* (3), the ornament of serpents (3), the feast of poison (4), the flaying of the skin of an elephant (5) and the sacred ash (5), the discomfiture of *Indra* (5) and the Sun (6) (at the sacrifice of *Dakṣa),* the crushing of *Rāvaṇa* (10), the hunter going after *Arjuna* (8), the sharing of the body with the damsel and *Viṣṇu* (9) — all referred to.

III

There are some interesting descriptions of the Lord. "He is the great debater (*Nāvalaṉār*-1), the Lord of Goodness (2), my

patron and our Lord (5), the Chief (*Nāyakaṉ*-7), the great Dancer (6, 9), the Dancer of the fire (8), of the hue of the fire, full of pure gold" (5) — thus our poet gives expression to his experience of the Lord. The oratory, probably, refers to the debate in the court of the Brahmins (8). He speaks of the Lord as '*Vāyāṭi*' — sharp tongued (8). He refers to His coming reciting the *Vēdas* as a Brahmin (8). But he describes Him as a '*Nāyāṭi* (8) and '*Vēyavaṉār*' (7) — 'the hunter probably because of his cruel persistence in the debate' (8). Or, is there the idea of the Hound of Heaven involved in the conception of a Hunter. (*Vēyavaṉār* — 7, may mean a spy and a Dandin or a Brahmin. — The '*Stala-Purāṇa*' of this place gives the story of the Lord manifesting Himself in a bamboo shrub. — *Nāyāṭi* may mean Lord dancing with your Mother — '*Nāy*'; '*ñāy*'). "When He saved me in that assembly out of His characteristic of love, I spoke harsh words. He gave me the great status of an obstinate servant. Even when I abused Him, He gave me gold and made me experience pleasures" (2). "He became my mother and father" (7). "He made me attached to His feet of gold without any birth or death so that I may not leave Him and go away from Him" (7).

IV

Our poet refers to *Candēśvara* whom the Lord loved as Himself (4). He also remembers the dance of *Tillai* (6), the enjoyment at *Kōṭi* (3), the temple of *Kuṭamūkku, Kōval* and *Kōt tiṭṭai* (6). He speaks of the Lord enjoying the bath with the five yields of the cow — a mode of worship already referred to (4).

V

Our poet thus gives expression to the Lord cutting away the shackles of his *karma* and this makes him assure a similar blessing to those who learn or with love listen to this *Tamiḻ hymn* of *Ārūrar, Vaṉroṇṭaṉ,* who is very well fitted to speak of the greatness of *Nāvalūr* as the city of the Lord, his own city, the city where *Naraciṅkamuṉai Araiyaṉ* serves the Lord out of love (11).

CHAPTER LVI

TIRUKKAḺUKKUṈṞAM

(*Hymn* 81)

I

The joy of his divine experience and of the feeling resulting in freedom takes in this *hymn* the form of a message to the world, because this kind of joy can never be selfish. His joy flows to others for benefiting this world. He is himself so much taken up with this message that he begs of others to fall at the feet of those who worship the Lord reciting his own poetic words of rhythmic beauty probably because he has forgotten himself whilst singing this *hymn* and feels these words express inspired truths (10).

The pattern of the last sentence in every verse is, "the place of the Lord is the cool *Kaḻukkuṉṟam*". *'Iṭam'* comes either at the end of the second or the third line; the fourth line always ends with the words *'Taṉkaḻukkuṉṟam'*. But in verses 3 and 8, *'iṭam'* does not occur. In verse 10 the *iṭam* comes in the first line and *'Kaḻukkuṉṟam'* comes in the second line. The first five verses and the ninth verse beg of the people of the world to worship at *Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam*. Verses 6, 7 and 8 speak of the Lord without any such specific advice; the poet speaks of the Lord becoming enshrined there for getting a place in the heart of his followers.

II

The rest of the verses is taken up by the description of *Kaḻuk-kuṉṟam* full of natural beauty, suggesting that "even the bees of the place stay humming in the holy mountain and worship the Lord" (7). "The she-elephant along with (its child and with) its lord of the three flowing musts and of the long trunk circum-ambulates the cool mountain to be cured of the fatigue caused by their roaring noise produced whilst in search of each other" (4). "The monkeys, the male and the female, along with their young

ones which had drunk the milk of the mother, in loving embrace, rush in that jungle of cool *Kaḻukkuṉṟam*" (5). "The bees feast on the honey and sing their sweet tunes whilst the peacocks of the jungle live permanently there (because of this tune being in harmony with their dance)" (7). "Everything there becomes full of munificence like the Lord. The clouds become full with rain" (9). "The tall bamboos shower round pearls" (9). "The roaring white cataract descends down carrying pearls and gems of shining colours" (2).

III

His Lordship over the *Dēvas* (1), the mat-lock shining with *Koṉṟai* (2), the eight arms (2), the blue throat, (3), the sharp battle-axe (4) the dance of white ash (4), the trident (5), the great dance (7), the worship by *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8), the ear-ring (9), the begging bowl of a white skull (10)—are all referred to, reminding us of the various *purāṇic* stories.

IV

"People kill and do all sorts of cruel acts; because of these, others describe in many ways their cruelty, their simple acts, come to stay. In order that these varied *karmas* may disappear, you go down and worship Him (1) every day" (3). "He will save us and accept us as His servant, according to His great rule of love" (3). "For getting rid of your ignorance or foolishness, fall at His feet" (4); "for getting rid of your meanness (5), for getting rid of your faults (9), fall at His feet" (9). "He is there at *Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam* for getting enshrined in the minds of those innocent (6) and innumerable (*antamillā*—8) followers of His of firm faith (*maṭam*—6) and who have no faults" (7). "Because He has come there for getting Himself enshrined in the minds of His followers, the great *Dēvas* worship Him here every day offering the flowers of their heart the flowers which increase in number every day and which cast their fragrance all round the jungle of this cool mountain" (8).

V

This *hymn* also must belong to the period of his political greatness or to a period succeeding it, for the poet describes himself the '*Ūraṉ* of the round shoulders, great in wrestling' (10).

VI

(The metre is that of what we now call *'kalitturai'* every line consisting of 13 syllabic letters if beginning in *'nēr'* and of 14 if beginning in *'nirai'*. The general pattern is—*'mā'*, *'mā'*, *'mā'*, *'viḷam'*, *'viḷam'*, allowing variations if *'veṇṭaḷai'* rhythms come in such places of variations. According to this scheme and from the iyal *Tamiḻ* point of view the third *'cīr'* in line 2 of verse 4 should be *'maḻuvaṉ'* instead of the present reading *'Maḻuvāḷaṉ'* which is probably due to the error of the copyist).

TIRUKKACCŪR ĀLAKKŌYIL

(*Hymn* 41)

I

This is one of the *hymns* on *Bhikṣāṭana* form so dear to our poet. Though, only in four verses (1, 2, 6 and 9) there is direct mention of *Bhikṣāṭana* form, we may assume that in the other verses also there is an implied reference to our Lord going a-begging for the love of His followers, however unworthy they may be. The Lord enshrining Himself in the various temples in all the places where people live is itself another representation of the great truth that the Lord is hankering after us (3).

II

"Many are your temples, O, my Lord! I have praised them all, carrying them as it were on my head and I have become relieved of all my confusion and ignorance and I have driven out my *karmas*"—thus sings our poet in this very *hymn* (3). The natural beauty of the holy place itself delivers that message to our poet—this holy place full of the fertile fields on which reside for ever the swans (10). The place knows no fear (2), this beautiful temple of cool groves of flowers (3), the temple which knows no want (3), and he cries, "O, the Lord of *Kaccūr Ālakkōyil* of the paddy fields where resides the Goddess of wealth on the flower" (4). He, out of love, almost embraces this holy place full of waters. There are gardens all round this place, bazaars, gem-bedecked *maṇṭapas* and virgin-homes or '*kaṉṉimāṭams*' (4). 'He is there', our poet says in another verse, 'as the past *Karma* (the ancient Providence), as the fruit of the *karma,* removing all the anxieties of those who wake up at dawn to worship Him even as He destroyed the three cities' (5). "He is beautiful like the evening moon" (5). "He is the rare medicine on the mountain removing all diseases" (5) and, therefore, our poet exclaims, "I, your slave, cannot forget you" (5). "I have ceased to think of you, having tended my flesh to grow, ah! me, a cruel man devoid of all senses" (8). "You are there to save all; if even deceitful pretenders praise you falsely, even that, you take as full of significance.

Please think of those, my Lord! who truly and sincerely think of you" (7).

III

In the other verses, the reference to *Bhikṣāṭana* form as already stated is more direct. If you go begging with the broken head of a skull (1), even in mid-day (2), will not the followers who love you, feel miserable at this sorry plight of yours? Why not leave this up completely?" (6). "Is it proper that you should beg whilst there are followers who love you, forgetting themselves in that bliss, babbling like drunkards and praising you whilst showering fragrant and glorious flowers on you and doing all that you like?" (9). "I have learnt and I have seen" (9). "I can never forget you, O, Lord of the Mother! pray accept me as your slave and save me" (9).

It is thus clear that this *hymn* represents a further development of a spiritual joy of the poet who finds that the Lord has relieved him of all his miseries. Unable to bear the surging bliss, we saw him exclaiming unto the Lord and calling upon the people to fall at the feet of the Lord. The zenith of his divine bliss is reached in love as expressed in the *Tamilian* conception of *'akam'* which is very well represented in a concrete way in the *Bhikṣāṭana* form. Whilst it is the people who suffer that ought to go for getting relieved, here it is the doctor who comes of his own accord, to cure the patient. Our poet is surprised and astonished at this, for, he himself, a patient, has been cured by this great Doctor of a God. What Greatness! What Love! And yet nobody realizes it and the poor Lord has to go about begging at our doors for saving us! At this very thought any heart will melt. It is to this feeling, our poet is giving expression to, in this *hymn*. He exclaims, *"Atuvē āmāṟituvō?"*—'Is that this?' (1). "I have heard of that method of yours, that love of yours, going about begging for saving us. Little did I realize then the truth of the story; here, in this world, this way you have saved me"—that is the meaning of the exclamation, "Is that this"?. *Cēkkiḻār* interprets this in similar terms: *"Mutalvaṉār taṉperuṅkaruṇai, atuvām itu eṉṟu aticayam vanteyta"* (*Ēyarkōṉ*: V. 182).

The jackals (1), the burning ghat (1), the fire dance (1), the broken skull (1), the waist band of a serpent (2), the jingling of the *'kaḻal'* and *'cilampu'* (2), the company of the Mother (7), the fragrant *koṉṟai* (8), the roaming about door to door in the

villages (2), the bull (4), and the flag (4), the blue throat (5), the mat-lock (4), the form of brightness like the flash of the lightning (4), the *Ganges* and the crescent on the mat-lock (7), the flaying of the elephant skin (8)—all referred to. The name of the holy place is '*Ālakkōyil*' or 'the Banyan temple' which suggests to him the story of the Lord sitting under the banyan tree to expound the *Dharma*.

IV

Our poet condemns himself—a condemnation contradictory to what we know of his life (8). Therefore, it ought to be taken as an exaggeration of the ordinary life of the people. Our poet, when he thinks of the beggar Lord saving him, looks at himself and begins to condemn himself, because of the great contract which suddenly grows before his very eyes. Are we not greatest sinners when we see our Lord go a-begging for our own salvation and for our own souls? His ways are inexplicable. Even the people of the Heavens do not know His path. We do not know what He wants. We can only say, "O, Our, Lord! Save us and accept us in all seven-fold seven births" (2).

Our poet speaks of himself as *Ārūraṉ* whose heart always rushes to think of the Lord (10). He considers it a good fortune that he is named after the Lord of *Ārūr*, that it should be the first name of his as named by his parent (10). (We are told that our poet was, as was customary named after his grand-father).

V

The rhythm of this *hymn* portrays the loving dance of the poet's heart. The poet himself probably enjoys this and that is why he describes himself as the eternal poet or scholar blessed with the tongue or the power of speech expressing the sweetest and the purest word—"*Maṉṉu pulavaṉ—ceñcol nāvaṉ*" (10). "Those who are masters of this garland of a *Tamiḻ* book (*hymn*) sung by *Ārūraṉ* will ever reside on my head"—that is how our poet concludes this *hymn* (10). He must have felt the inspiration behind this poetry to express himself in these terms. In the previous *hymn*, he begged of the world to fall at the feet of those who recite that *hymn*. In this *hymn* he himself falls at their feet, thus reaching the very height of self-surrender and divine bliss.

TIRUVĒKAMPAM TIRUMĒṞṞAḶI

(*Hymn* 21)

I

What can a poet resolve upon after the experience of the bliss of the Lord, as experienced in the previous *hymn*? The poet here exclaims to the Lord, "I shall not praise any one but you"—"*Uṉṉaiyallāl. . . . ēttamāṭṭēṉē*"—these are the words which occur in every one of the fourth lines of the verses of this *hymn*. The third line describes the temple '*Tirumēṟṟaḷi*' of *Coñjīvaram* lying at the western entrance to the fort of *Coñjīvaram* overlooking the famous sylvan tract lying there. "The fortified great city of '*Kāñci*' is the city of the *Pallavas,* the city of the world" (10)—that is how our poet describes it and we know in the age in which *Ārūrar* lived, the civilized world of the East was turning towards *Coñjīvaram.* This temple was surrounded by big fortress walls of stone (9) and by grand palaces (2) and by cool paddy fields full of waters beautified by the ripples (8) and the fresh lotuses growing in the slushy rich soil (7).

II

The first feet in the fourth lines and in the other lines give us the descriptions of the Lord which our poet loves very much: "*Entāy*—my father" (1); "*Māṭē*—my wealth" (2); "*Ēṟē*—my lion" (3); "*Paṟṟē*—my prop" (4); "*Pemmāṉ*—my Lord'" (5); "*Kōṉē*—my king" (6); "*Aiyā*—my chief" (7); "*Araiyā*—my prince" (8); "*Malaiyē*—my mountain" (9); (the *māṭu, malai* and *ēṟu* as residing inside the *Tirumēṟṟali* make these conceptions very concrete and beautiful); "*Talaivā*—my leader" (9); "*Cintāy*—the Lord of the mind" (1). The poet is very fond of the Lord appearing as the shining light (*Oṉ cuṭar*—6), as the bright light which never fades (*Nontā oṉ cuṭar*—1). Our poet addresses the Lord as '*Vimalā*'—the blotless or who removes the blot and purifies us (8), and as the Lord appearing as honey (6) and the sweetest nectar (6). He twice describes Him in this *hymn* as the real of the real, "*Meypporuḷ*" (3, 5). Here also our poet refers to the *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord—the destruction of the three cities (4, 7), the flaying of the elephant's skin (5) and the fragrant *koṉṟai* (8).

III

For the rest, the *hymn* gives our poet's own experience of the Lord. "I kept thinking of you; you came in and you had never known going out. O, Lord of mind who had entered my heart, I shall not hereafter praise anyone but you" (1)." Because I became the servant of yours, I have entered the service of your followers and I have heard all that is there to be heard and I have heard that I am never more to be born. I cannot praise with joy any but you" (2). "Out of laziness, once in a way, I might not have thought of you; but even then, you are the true principle capable of entering into my mind coming in another way. I cannot praise hereafter anyone but you" (3). "The kith and kin and the relatives—these I had left off and I have taken refuge in you. In what way is there any want? I have completely renounced my miseries. You are my prop. I shall not worship and praise anyone but you" (4). "My father and my mother—all these have left me and are dead. All that which truly create delusions (all the delusions due to this body), You have removed and You have blessed me, O, Thou true principle, O, Lord! I shall not praise anyone but you" (5). "As for me, I contemplated on your feet. As soon as I contemplated on you, you entered this body of flesh, O, Brilliant Light, my honey, my sweetest nectar, my prince, I shall not with a cool heart praise anyone but you" (6). The burning of the three cities implies the destruction of our own *malas*, miseries and defects. Therefore, our poet describing this feat of the Lord, exclaims, "O, Lord! my Chief! I shall not knowingly praise anyone but you" (7). "I shall not speak hereafter of anyone but you with my tongue as long as this life lasts in this body. O, king! I shall not knowingly praise anyone but you" (8). "I have firmly contemplated on your feet and as soon as I so contemplated on you, my chief, you allowed me to contemplate on you and all the decéits have disappeared. O, the mountain of *Tirumēṟṟaḷi!* I shall not happily praise anyone but you" (9).

IV

These outpourings of his heart give us a true picture of his spiritual elevation—a spiritual state which can be called *Śivalōka.* Our poet says he has sung the *Śiva Tirumēṟṟaḷi*—he, *Ārūraṉ* the slavish *Toṇṭaṉ.* He assures, "Those who are masters of this famous *hymn,* they that will reach the *Śivalōka,*" for as we have stated, the *hymn* represents that kind of highest spiritual state (10).

CHAPTER LIX

TIRU ŌṆAKĀNTAṈ TAḶI

(*Hymn* 5)

I

The present cycle of *hymns* may be compared with the cycle of *hymns*—24 14, etc. After the exclamation, "I shall not praise anyone else" (*H* : 21), the poet gets rid of the tension of the over-surging bliss through his humorous address to the Lord who has thus become near and dear to him, as it were, a friend and companion as the tradition states. This may be even compared to the humorous speech of the damsels in love with the *Bhikṣāṭana,* what *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* will characterize as '*Pulavi nuṇukkam*'. The *purāṇic* descriptions and the poetic experiences all roll into one great humour though at bottom, shine the spiritual greatness and divine love of the Lord.

II

"The *Bhaktas* have begun worshipping you daily with ghee, milk and curd. But there is no coin in their hand, unless they serve through their worshipping your feet of victorious anklets" (1). As usual our poet passes from the objective statements about the *Bhaktas* which are themselves his own experience —to the description of his own state. "The five (senses) there, take hold of me. They make me dance and I dance. I am caught up into the deep slough going down deeper and deeper therein. O, Thou, who art inside *Ōṇakāntaṉ Taḷi,* bless me with a way of escape from this" (1).

"(What can we get from you? You are lost in the floods). The waves dash and roll up above the moon bedecked mat-lock. As for the damsel, the *Ganges,* she will never open her mouth. (Your eldest son), *Gaṇapati* is a voracious eater. The Lord of the spear (*Subrahmaṇya*) is an infant-boy. Your wife plays on the *Yāḻ* (*Vīṇa*) and will never save or take care of us. O, thou inside the *Ōṇakāntaṉ Taḷi,* we cannot serve your people!" (2). There is another reading *"koṟṟu aṭṭi āḷāḷ"* for *"kōṟṟaṭṭi āḷāḷ"*: the interpretation given is that she does not offer the daily batta).

"Whether they get anything or not, the *Bhaktas* praise your feet with all care and love. You do not sympathize and feel for them who are without any other prop or attachment. You do not sympathize and feel for them. You do not behave like a reasonable person (as far as they are concerned). When they become absolutely destitute and when they are miserable, in such times of despair, O, Lord, can they mortgage you and eat?" (3).

"Even if they praise stating all they are capable of, you do not open your mouth and say whether you have or whether you have not. You see there for saving us but alas! to what purpose? You will never leave off the life of roaming about for alms all through the day, with the teethless skull of a bowl". (It is this which made us suggest that these verses may be taken as the speeches of the damsels in love with *Bhikṣāṭana*) (4).

"Your followers again and again come together, dance and sing without defect in their song or tune. They weep and their hearts melt. You do not think of any happiness for these lovers of yours. I go constantly in quest of you, roaming about and getting fatigued and yet you do not sympathize with me. Neither do you desert me and run away, nor do you offer any help" (5).

"The damsel who is never separated from your loving embrace has established the *Kāmakkōṭṭam* at *Kacci* for saving the whole world. While this *Kāmakkōṭṭam* is there, why do you go receiving alms from various cities?" (6).

"You spend your time by pretences. You are neither outside nor inside; You do not tell us the truth and accept as your servant and save us. You cannot give us anything. If you receive us, you want nothing, you give nothing and you say nothing. You, Sir, my Lord, I am addressing you alone" (*Emmaipperṟāl*—accepting the *Bhaktas* as His servants is thus looked upon as something valuable from the point of view of the Lord) (7).

"The God of Death has spread his net. He comes and stands up above. I have heard this word or statement. Making my mind as firm as a stone, I contemplate on you and fall at your feet. That is the only way of escape. Otherwise, I cannot be in communion with you allowing the six passions to grow and develop. [The six passions are: *Kāma, Kṟōta, Lōpa, Mōha, Mada* and *Mātsarya*—*Mātsaryam* may be taken as *'ceṟṟam'*. The old commentator on *Cilappatikāram* interprets *'ceṟṟam'* as *'mātsarya'*

(*Vaḻakkurai kātai—'Ceṟṟaṉalpōlum*). Therefore, '*Mōha*' alone has to find a corresponding word in the list given by *Ārūrar*. The only word found there is '*Varuṭai*'. '*Maruṭṭal*' is found used in the sense of attraction perhaps as a variant of '*maruḷ*' which probably leads us to the significance of '*Mōha*' or wonderful delusion. The Tamil Lexicon however gives the meaning '*Mātsaryam*' taking '*Varuṭai*' to be a corruption of '*spardha*'; but this cannot be correct for we do not get the six well known passions. The next problem is the meaning of the phrase '*Kalaiyamaitta*' which occurs as the qualification given by our poet to these passions. '*Kalai*' may be taken to mean the body, when these passions may be taken to be bubbling up within the body of ours. There is also another reading '*kalaiyam vaitta*' where the '*kalaiyam*' can only mean the pot, metaphorically meaning the body. '*Ulaiyamaittal*' is making them ready for enjoyment even as we cook the rice for being served. There can be a better suggestion. *Kalai* may be taken to mean the fine-arts and our poet may be giving us a clue to his philosophy of art in this phrase '*kalaiyamaitta*'.] There is thus a great purpose served by these passions. When they are sublimated into the sentiments of fine arts they serve this purpose and become divine" (8).

"In whose city do you live? (the city you live in, is somebody's). As for *Oṟṟiyūr* (which means a mortgaged city) it is not yours. You have taken for your wife the *Ganges* and placed her inside your mat-lock. Your city is the burning ghat and your garments are the skins. Your necklace is but a serpent. What do the *Bhaktas* get, these *Bhaktas* who out of love serve your beautiful feet?" (9).

Our poet has given here the various modes of worship with ghee, milk, curd, praises, dance, music, contemplation and love.

III

He refers to the *purāṇic* descriptions—the moon (2), the mat-lock (2), the *Ganges* (2), *Gaṇapathy* (2), *Kumaraṉ* (2), the Mother (2), the skull (4), the begging (4), the *koṉṟai* (6), *Kāmakkōṭṭam* (6), the burning ghat (9), the garments of skin (9), the bull (10). The bull is here said to be in the form of *Praṇava*. The poet says he has described in an orderly way the form the Lord has assumed wearing the loin cloth and adorning himself with nice cotton and silk clothes (10). This description is not intelligible, for, on the surface, the loin cloth and the silk con-

tradict each other. It has been suggested elsewhere that this may be a description of *Ardhanārīśvara'* form. It may be the present reading *'vīkki'* in *'Paṭṭu vīkki'* a mistake for the original word *'nīkki'* when it may mean that God has discorded the cotton and silk for the loin cloth of a beggar. This will be in keeping with the general trend of this *hymn* which, as we have suggested, gives the description of the beggar Lord, who may in a humorous vein be referred to as incapable of supporting His followers.

IV

"Āvaṇam ceytāḷum koṇṭu' occurs in the last verse of this *hymn* and it is taken by the tradition, as referring to the deed of sale which the Lord produced for saving our poet. We had discussed this phrase elsewhere.

V

In singing this *hymn* in this humorous vein as the friend and companion or lover of the Lord, the poet has experienced a feeling of identity wherein all the sins and past *karmas* completely disappear. Therefore the poet assures that there will disappear similarly the sins of those who are masters of these ten verses of *Tamiḻ* which is the very form of poetry (10).

CHAPTER LX

TIRUKKACCI ANĒKATAṄKĀVATAM

(*Hymn* 10)

I

Some of the *hymns* were observed to be on the pattern, "The holy spot is the rendezvous of the Lord". This *hymn* is an elaboration of this kind of pattern expressing the joy at the place and ecstasy of the experience of the messages of the *purāṇic* stories. "This is the place of the Lord of this activity; this is the place of the Lord of another activity" — In this way, in every verse '*iṭam*' or 'place' is repeated many a time, each time in relation with a specific *purāṇic* activity of the Lord. The tune is '*Intaḷam*', the same as that of the previous *hymn*, but the metre moves quicker, making us feel the poet dancing in his ecstasy at the sight of the temple reminding him of the esoteric meaning of the *purāṇic* stories.

II

The *purāṇic* stories and descriptions are referred to and enjoyed one after another with a special relish. The mat-lock with humming bees wherein comes together in loving harmony the *Ganges* (4), the *koṉṟai* flower (4), the serpent (5), the crescent moon (3), the deer (1), and the *maḻu* or the battleaxe (3), held in the hands as symbols of poetic beauty, the flag of bull (2), the blue throat (6), the ear-ring of conch shell (4), the flaying of the elephant (1) and the destruction of Death (6) and *Kāma* (1) and the three cities (8), the dance with the ghosts (2) on the burning ghat (9) with eight serpents (7) are all mentioned. One may look upon the whole *hymn* as a description of this dance of '*Aṭṭapuyaṅkam*' or eight serpents.

The esoteric significance of these stories is also given. The deer held upon His hand is said to be the defectless *Vēda*, "*Kuṟaiyā maṟaiyām māṉai iṭattatōr kaiyaṉ iṭam*" (1). The destruction of Death and *Tiripuram* is mentioned along with the description of the bees sleeping in the flowers of the places (8), thereby suggesting what appears to be a destruction is nothing more than rest and sleep for those concerned.

The Lord is said to be in the company of the Mother. In one place He is described as He who has *Tiru* in his chest, a description usually given of *Viṣṇu*. *"Tirumārpakalattu Aṭikaḷiṭam"* (3). This reminds us of *Ñāṉa Campantar*: *'Peṇkoḷ tirumārpiṉiṟ pūcum pemmāṉ'*.[1] It may mean that she is sharing the chest of the Lord. *"Tiru"* is another name for the Mother Goddess as already noted.

III

The beauty of the place is also described. This is the place where sing the *koels* and where dance the peacocks (3). It is the place where glows the sun (7). It is the spot where the she-koel plays with its lover (7) and where the flower blossoming with the overflowing honey is encircled by the *'mātavi* creeper' (7)—a marriage and union of fragrance—the place where sleep the she-bees inside the soft petals of the cool *mātavi, mavval, kurā, vakuḷam, kurukkatti* and *puṉṉai* (8). We have already referred to this sleep suggesting the esoteric significance of the destruction of Death and *Tripura* thus raising even the descriptions of Nature to the mystic level.

IV

The Lord is *Śaṅkara* (9)—one who creates happiness. He is our Lord (*Emperumāṉ*) (2) of excellent community (5) (of *Bhaktas*). He is a munificent patron (*Pirāṉ*) (7). He is our father (*Attaṉ*-5, *Appaṉ*-2) He is the Holy. There .are other descriptions of the Lord in relation to the blessings He confers on the Bhaktas and also descriptions suggesting the ways of worshipping the Lord. It is the place where the decaying enmity of the cruel *karma* ceases (3). It is the place where those who have begun their spiritual practice of being in communion with Him, keep their mind concentrated on the one unique path, where they shine, where the *Bhaktas* who have turned their mind on to the Heavenly feet of wealth or Grace of the Lord lose their heart captivated by Him (5). It is the place where the Lord removes this bondage of a body, this bondage of those who think of Him even whilst in their bodily existence in this birth (6). It is the place where those who have cut asunder their bondage and mental delusion worship the Lord with their hands (7). It is the place where stand many, for many aeons, for attaining salvation (10), the place

1. 1: 70; 3.

where *karmas* disappear (10)—the place of the great men assembled for attaining excellence (10). The idea of release from *karmas* is emphasized often and often and in one place he refers to the spot as the place where the Lord removes the mortal agony caused by the followers of the Lord of Death to the people of our poet's following, not merely relatives but also those belonging to his spiritual community of *Bhaktas* (6). The poet with reference to this describes the Lord as *Śivalōkaṉ*—the Lord of the world of *Śiva* (10).

V

In the last verse usually describing the good result following from the recitation of the *hymns,* our poet says no more than calling attention to this Holy spot as the place where flock together in communion, those who have mastered the verses of the garland of *hymns* sung by the famous *Ūraṉ,* who becomes a slave whilst singing of the Lord. This seems to suggest that *Śivalōka* is itself any place where flock the *Bhaktas* singing the praise of the Lord.

VI

Aṉēkataṅkāvatam occurs as the name of a *Śaivite* shrine of the North in the poems of *Campantar.* A temple of that type seems to have been built at *Kāñci* by the time of *Ārūrar.* The meaning of the term is not clear. In the last verse we have another difficulty; for '*Kalikkacci Aṉēkataṅkāppaṉ*' gives the form *aṉēkataṅkāppu.*

CHAPTER LXI

TIRUVANPĀRTTAṈ PAṈAṄKĀṬṬŪR

(*Hymn* 86)

I

In the previous *hymn*, we found the poet dancing in joy at the thought of *Aṉēkataṅkāvatam* reminding him of the activities of the Lord. It is not merely the joy of his own experience. The *hymn* sounds like the eureka of a new discoverer, crying out in joy to the world at large, so that the whole humanity may be benefited by this discovery. Thus the world comes back to the mind of the poet unobtrusively. This inspires him with the thought that nothing but God is of any worth and, therefore, pities those who do not take refuge in Him. The last two metrical feet of every verse in this *hymn* expresses this idea. "Of what worth is the dependence (prop) of those who do not depend (rely) on God?" (What is their prop?) (1). "Of what worth is the experience of those who have not experienced God?" (What is their experience?) (2). "Of what worth is the speech of those who do not speak of the Lord?" (3 & 4). "Of what worth is the worship or praise of those who do not praise the Lord?" (5). "Of what worth is the practice (or company) of those who do not practise the service of the Lord?" (6). "Of what worth is the knowledge of those who do not know the Lord?" (7). "Of what worth is the thought (or mind) of those who do not think of the Lord?" (8). "Of what worth is the sympathy or love of those who do not melt at the thought of the Lord?" (9). The rest of the verses describe the Lord as of great worth for us all—the descriptions are piled up in the accusative case.

II

The idea of the Lord enshrining Himself in the world for our sake is not forgotten. "Therefore, of what worth is the praise of those who do not praise the munificent patron—the One who is the Supreme being (*Paramaṉ*) of *Vaṉpārttāṉ Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* (enshrining there) only for the purpose of showering His blessings and hastening to grant our boons?"—that is the fifth verse. "He

is the Lord who is glorious in having *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* as His city"—that is the 9th verse. He is both the objective and the subjective truth. He is the immanent principle. "He is the munificent patron residing in our heart and in *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* of gem-bedecked and cloud-clad beautiful palaces" (8). In this way the temple is being mentioned in every one of the verses in the second half of the third lines.

The place is called *Vaṉpārttāṉ Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* or *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr*, a city of palmyra trees. *Vaṉpārttāṉ* is not clear. Or, can it be this is an equivalent to *Paṭiṟaṉ* (the deceitful one) in verses 2, 3, 4 and 7. From Sri. V. S. Chengalvaraya Pillai we learn that the usual explanation is that there is a village by name *Vaṉpākkam* near this *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* and that in order to distinguish this *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* from other *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūrs* this place is described specifically as *Vaṉpākkam Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr*. *Vaṉpārttāṉ* is a wrong reading of *Vaṉpākkam*—'*k*' and '*t*' being liable to be confused in the early inscriptions.

His rendezvous is the *Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr* sorrounded by the gardens full of peacocks (6). The place is described with reference to the worship by the *Bhaktas* (1). It is the place where the sound of the conch and the drum never ceases (2). The blowing of the conch is a part of temple worship and the playing on the drum reminds us of festivals (2). The *hymn* mentions: "The songs full of music sung by the *Bhaktas* who praise Him with all their hearts with fresh flowers of the day—the numerous valuable flowers or the eight flowers—appropriate for the firelike beautiful form of the Lord who is adorned with the cool crescent moon" (3). "Service unto the Lord is praised" (6 & 9).

III

The Lord is described in relation to these *Bhaktas*—"*Aṭaiyil aṉpu uṭaiyāṉ*" (1). "He is full of love if you take refuge in Him though unknown to all" (1). "He is in the mind of those who are not crooked" (4). "If you melt in love He resides in your heart" (5). "He is the Birthless Lord, never forgetting those whose minds are devoid of deceit" (8). Thus the characteristic features of the true *Bhaktas* are mentioned.

The characteristic features of the Lord are also praised. He is the significant meaning of the *Vēdas* (1). He is the unknowable (1). He is the male and the female (3). He is of unsullied character (4). He is the great significant thing that is true know-

ledge (5). He is the sunshine, the wind that blows, the lightning and the fire (6). He is the truthful, the Lord of the *Vēdas,* the form of all art, (7), (not only Nature as mentioned in 6). He is the oldest of the old (9). He is our patron inside our heart; (8) the Supreme one (*Paramaṉ*—5; *Pirāṉ*—7); the Chief (*Aiyaṉ*—7).

IV

There occur also the *Purāṇic* descriptions of the bull (1), the *Ganges* on the mat-lock (1), the jingling anklet (2), the dancing snake (2), the fire, (2), the dance (2), the crescent moon (2), the ear-ring (9), the eye on the fore-head (4), the sacred ash (4), the ornaments of skull (5), the eight shoulders (6) the deer (7) and the battle-axe (7), the destruction of the three cities (6) and the Lord of Death (7), the company of the Mother (8), the colour of the fire (3) and the coral (10), and the worship of *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* (9).

V

With reference to the last incident, the poet speaks of the Lord going up above the high Heavens whilst those two stood by His side and contemplated on Him (9). Our poet assures that those who recite this *hymn* will also thus go up above the High Heavens (the very words are used)—probably suggesting that they will become one with the Lord. The poet tells us in passing that he is called after the Lord of *Ārūr*—that is the first part of his name—"*Tiruvārūr-c Civaṉ pēr ceṉṉiyil vaitta Ārūraṉ*" (10). He calls himself in all humility "*Aṭit toṇṭaṉ*", the slave and servant, the dog—"*Aṭittoṇṭaṉ aṭiyaṉ* col *aṭināy col*" (10).

CHAPTER LXII

TIRUKKĀLATTI

(*Hymn* 26)

I

In our analysis of the *hymn* No. 55, it was suggested that something must have happened in the political career of our poet to disturb the peace of the poet's mind. Probably it was this which sent him on a northern tour on a pilgrimage to the various temples. The real cause is his mental and spiritual development, the occasion being provided by the political conditions. Our poet now reaches the limit of the ancient *Tamiḻ* Country, *Tirukkāḷatti*. The poet, who sang in the previous *hymn* that all that which had no relationship to the Lord had no worth or value, expresses here his conviction and his resolution that he shall not consciously praise anyone but the Lord. This *hymn* is addressed to the Lord directly. Most of the verses end with the words, "*Uṉṉaiyallāl aṟintētta-māṭṭēṉē*"; Verse No. 3 has the variation, "*Uṉṉaiyallāl ukantētta-māṭṭēṉē*" and *V*. 8 has "*Iṉiyēttamāṭṭēṉē*"; *V*. 7 has the ending "*Uṉṉaiyallāl aṟiyēṉ maṟṟoruvaraiyē*"; but there is another reading which makes the ending of that verse also similar to the other; *V*. 9 has "*Uṉṉaiyallāl iṉiyoṉṟum uṇarēṉē*". It looks as though that the original reading in all the verses should have been '*Uṉṉaiyallāl aṟintēttamāṭṭēṉē*'. This ending reminds us of a similar chorus of the *hymn* No. 21 which our poet sung whilst he was at *Kāñci* in the course of his northern tour.

One of the names of the Lord of *Tirukkāḷaṭṭi* was *Gaṇanātaṉ* and our poet mentions that name in *VV*., 1, 3 and 10.

II

This *hymn* of our poet taking refuge in the Lord expresses his surrender to the Lord. The poet refers as usual to the various *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord: the bull (1), the loving company of the Mother (1), the Lordship of the *Gaṇas* (1, 3, 10) and the *Dēvas* (2), the blue throat (2), the battle axe (3), the destruction of the Sun (3), the Brahminhood of the Lord of His *Vēdic* scholarship (3), the ear-ring (3), the deer (4), the shawl of an

elephant skin (4) the cool and long mat-lock (7), the youth of the Lord (7), the sacred ash (8), and the begging with the skull (8).

III

The name which is so very important to the *Śaivites, Śiva* (1), is again mentioned in this *hymn.* As in *hymn* No. 21, *etc.*, the first foot of the fourth line in every verse expresses the significant relationship which the poet has experienced with the Lord: (*Aṇḍā*—1), the Lord of this very form of this Universe; (*Amaivē*—2), the Lord as perfection or peace or the constituted form; (*Uṭaiyāy*—3), the Lord as the owner of everything and as our Lord; (*Aṟivē*—4), the Lord as knowledge; (*Aiyā*—6) the Lord as our Chief; (*Ēṟē*—8), the lion or the bull; (*Oḷiyē*—9), the Lord as Light. Our poet calls Him (*Iṟaivā*—2), the Sovereign; (*Meyyavaṉ*—6), the truthful; (*Tiruvē*—6), the Great Wealth; (*Nimalā*—8), the blotless; (*Koḻuntē*—8), the beautiful sprout from the seed of everything. The wonderful phrase '*Ārā iṉṉamudu*' (10) describing our Lord as the sweet nectar with which we are never satiated, is again lovingly repeated in this *hymn.*

IV

There are certain descriptions of the Lord in relation to the poet's experience: "*Eṉ celuñcuṭarē*" (1)—'my rich Light'; "*Kaṇṭār kātalikkum....em kāḷattiyāy*" (1), 'my Lord of *Kāḷatti*—so loved by those who see the place'; "*Eṉ iṭarttuṇaiyē*" (2), 'O, my friend or help in misery'; "*Eṉ....kamaiyār karuṇaiyiṉāy*" (2), 'O, thou Lord of Grace full of patience or forbearance'; "*Kuṟiyē eṉṉuṭaiya Guruvē*" (4), 'my ideal and master'—This term *Guru* is significant, for it is the second time that our poet calls Him as his *Guru* or Master.

The poet continues to give us more of his subjective experience of the Lord. "I perform all kinds of services—even menial services—unto you (I cease to be a conscious living being) and lay down as something material, captivated by the damsels of the beautiful carp-like eyes; then, I shrieked and suffered, I, your slave, because I have not known anything good. Thus I spent many sleepless nights. Then, one day, I fell at your feet, O, Lord of *Kāḷatti*! I have now become fearless; I shall not consciously praise anyone but you" (5). "I was false, this dog of a slave of yours, I had not known any way of escape and refuge; you

came as the upright man and you removed all obstacles and sufferings, the truthful one, 'my chief' " (6). "Ah! I was a cruel one. I had not known those beautiful flowers of your feet; I had then no love for you and yet you have come yourself permanently to enshrine in my heart. O, my youthful Lord of *Kāḷatti*, where bow down the *Dēvas*" (7). "O, the blotless Lord, I shall not speak of anyone but you. O, my ocean of all qualities". (It is possible to have the reading, '*Eṇ Guṇakkaṭal*', the ocean of eight great qualities having in his mind the phrase, '*Eṇguṇattāṉ*' used by *Tiruvaḷḷuvar*) (8). "You have become so easy of reach and you have come of your own accord to enter my mind, O, my Lord" (9).

V

The place *Kāḷatti* is described as surrounded by palaces with gates (*Kaṭaiyār māḷikai*—3), (*Kaḷiyār vaṉṭaṟaiyum Tirukkāḷatti*—9), as the place where hum the intoxicated bees and (*Kārārum poḻil cūḻ Kāḷatti*—10) as being surrounded by cloud-clad gardens and as the place where the *Bhaktas* (4) and the *Dēvas* (7) contemplate on God.

VI

This *hymn* expresses the great joy the poet experienced when the Lord of His own accord saved our poet—a state of happiness which he is sure will ever be permanent and he, therefore, assures that those who recite these verses of beautiful *Tamiḻ* poetry that they will like himself get rid of all the *karmas*, achieving the permanent happiness of heaven without any fault of theirs existing thereafter. Our poet calls himself *Nāval Ārūraṉ* (10).

CĪPARPPATAM

(*Hymn* 79)

I

This is the *hymn* on *Cīparppatam* which has come to be known in later days as *Śrī Śaila*. In this *hymn,* the poet seems to identify the great mountain full of natural beauty with God Himself, for, we find every verse ending in an address to the mountain as *Cīparppata malaiyē*. Others have taken these verses to mean that this mountain is the abode of the Lord. The identification of nature with the Lord is significant as proving that our poet is preaching of no philosophy of world negation. If the poet has condemned anywhere this world, it must be interpreted as referring to the illusion, temptation and our false knowledge of this world. The poet believes that in essence this Universe is nothing but the beauty of the Lord, revealing to us a series of dramatic situations of highest imaginative poetry. The descriptions suggest that nature is full of love, making even the hard-hearted hunters to take pity on the helpless she-elephant (5).

II

The various kinds of deer and peacock mix together in groups everywhere in the mountain revelling and grazing as they like, drinking the waters of the mountain-springs, scratching their bodies against sweet smelling flower trees, passing through groves to sleep in the shade place of a sweet mango grove (1).

In the field of millet, the groups of boars go and make pits. The gems turn up shining like fire. Frightened, they roam about. The bear, the deer, the Indian elk, the peacock and many other beings feast on the honey, the grove and the garden are so abundant in this mountain (9).

The groups of she-elephants go into the groves and other mountain rendezvous; their young ones hit against their udders and drink their milk. Having thus strayed thus far away from their lord the he-elephant, they think of him and rush in search of him, roaring all along in confusion only to be fatigued at the

end. The he-elephant in his turn goes in search of his she-elephant. The Lord of the form of this mountain is thus the embodiment of the love of the mother, the love of the child and the reciprocal love of a wedded couple (2).

The group of elephants run helter-skelter and roam about in the rendezvous of the she-elephants. There, one of the she-elephants bends down its ear; the murderous hunters of the mountain of great honour take pity on it so much that they manufacture a cup out of the leaves for collecting the honey and feeding therewith the she-elephant. Such is the inspiration of love of this great mountain of a Lord (5).

The scene of love does not close there. The he-elephant perhaps suspects the she-elephant which has passed through groves of different scents which smell like the fragrance of different elephants. He becomes angry, holds up his trunk and vomits as it were fire and allows must to flow. His face is red and crooked with anger. He accuses his lover of having gone along with another elephant. The she-elephant cries that she cannot bear this scandal. She goes to convince her lover in the presence of others and swears in this great mountain (the reading is *'Piṭi cūḻaṟum'*; another reading is *'Piṭi cūḷuṟum'*: the context suggests that the correct reading should be *'Piṭi cūḷuṟam'*) (6).

A damsel of beautiful words keeps guard over her field of grains. The virgin parrots carry away the bunches of grain. She feels that these parrots will not care for her and makes her sling of stone resound when the beautiful good parrots roam about in fright and get to the top of this mountain to escape from the onslaught of the sling (*kavaṉ*) (3).

The maiden, the damsel, tries to drive away the parrot from the fields with the threatening words of her mouth, but they do not leave the field perhaps attracted by the sweetness of her words. She throws with her sling beautiful gems within the reach of her hand; the parrots at once rush away, these red-mouthed parrots which go and sing at the top of the mountain, the same song which the damsel has sung (4).

Brahma and *Viṣṇu*, alas! have not known the feet of the great Lord of ashes who burnt to ashes the three cities. But, here, in the mountain, which is the very form of the Lord, these he-elephants roaming about in groups with the she-elephants, shine

in all their glory, intoxicated with the honey which they had drunk. It is a heaven of sweetest experience (8).

The poet is giving alternately the beautiful poetic vision of loving parrots flying round the damsel of the mountain and of loving couple of elephants. The damsel watching the field of grains exclaims in love and despair: "You came and ate then; I kept quiet without calling for help; but if you come and eat away at every time, will not my people be enraged? Now this has become your habit": so saying she slings against the parrot, this damsel of the youthful bosom to drive it away (7).

III

The poet has thus sung this mountain of Śiva as a Heaven on earth, the divine Arcadia, though difficult to reach. This very description makes us happy, making us forget all our miseries and transporting us to the heights of Heavens where we stay for ever as rulers of this divine happiness — that is the assurance which our poet gives to those who master forgetting all miseries this *hymn*—of *Nāvalūraṉ* or the *Ūraṉ* of *Nāval* surrounded by paddy fields where live many a good soul (10).

CHAPTER LXIV

TIRUKKĒTĀRAM

(*Hymn* 78)

I

Our poet — our poet's mind according to *Cēkkilar* — goes beyond *Badari,* sung by *Tirumankai Ālvār* of the *Pallava* period, to the still higher regions of the *Himalayas,* known as *Kēdarnāth.* In the previous *hymn* nature appeared to our poet as the beautiful poetic form of the Lord. There itself we pointed out, that if Nature and this world appear otherwise as a spreading net of misery or as an endless ocean of suffering, it was due to the defect in our vision, to the defect in our behaviour — mistaking the world as a source of temptation and falling a prey to it. It is this latter aspect of the world that is emphasized in the present *hymn.* Our poet addresses the world at large against these temptations and against a life of futility, and exhorts everyone to utter in joy the name of this holy place of beauty and love, inspiring even the wild beasts to worship the Lord. Life, unless experienced as the love and beauty of the Lord, is ephemeral and futile and it becomes an illusion. It is sure to end in dust. It is a futile panorama — this limitless ocean of births — a trap of a body made of hunger and diseases.

II

"You roam about and labour in vain carrying this body. You do not know that the fox will one day tear away this body. This is the day appointed for its capture by the Lord of Death who proclaims it through the symptoms of coming end" (2). "A few eat the measured two ollocks of food. They work and save only to lose it all. 'Is it proper?' if you ask them, they reply, 'We shall escape' — ah, these men intoxicated with their intelligence! All this talk with those who fill up their body is vain" (4).

"Pray, do not get more and more entangled in the trap of the women, of broad eyes flashing like swords. Before the Lord of Death, running a race with time, comes near you, approach the Lord, and escape by becoming the servant of the Lord" (5).

"You labour in vain carrying this burden of a body. You do not know this burden is futile. These men intoxicated with their intelligence go along their path and fall down into the pit. That is fate" (9).

III

He also suggests the way out. "You just mention the name of the Holy place *Tirukkētāram*" — this is, as it were, the refrain of the *hymn*. "You perform *Dharma* or *Aṟam* or good acts without any delay. There are indeed *Aṟams* (to save you)" (1). "The Lord is more knowing than the knower. There you see in *Tirukkētāram*, people worshipping the Lord and distributing freely the fragrant waters and food with a charming speech" (2). "Without wasting your time on those who fill up their body perform *tapas*. You see there at *Tirukkētāram* people worshipping the Lord and pouring the sacred waters to the East" (to the morning Sun) (4). "Become His servant and be saved. You need not discuss that His abode is something far off. It is equally here nearby. This *Tirukkētāram* is His abode" (5). "*Tapas* is there only when we attain Him (or when our ego is thoroughly removed and when we achieve complete self-control). The sacred bath in the holy waters is effected by the mind soaking through and through in the Holiness of *Kurukṣētra, Godavari* and *Kumari* (Cape Comorin). The inner mind must become crystal clear. That is the worship of *Śrī Parvata*. The whole world is a unity and even the parrot proves by tearing the fruits it eats, from South to North. The Lord is here at *Tirukkētāram* establishing for us all our goal" (6).

IV

The beasts and plants also are inspired by the holiness of the place; "The one-legged beings catch hold of the creeper and shower on the Lord the flowers reciting the *mantras* of the *Ṛg-Vēda* at midnight and in the midday with certainty that our Lord will save us all. The elephants stand in groups and pour down the waters of the mountain stream and shower on Him, the red powder" (3). "The old bamboo resounds like the musical drum reminding us of the musical compositions in *Tamiḻ*. The golden springs full of light but sweet to the eyes, rain their diamonds. The elephants standing on the earth carry the gems and throw them away. This creates the music resounding all through the holy place" (7). "The young she-elephant speaks words of praise

and breaks down the old bamboos. The he-elephants stand in groups and shower the waters of the mountain spring. This appears like rain from the bent up trunk of the elephants. The peacocks scratch the ground while the deer frisk about and the gems are hurled up and thrown out" (8).

V

The Lord is described as the one whom *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu* searched, going up and down as the Lord of the serpent and the loin cloth, the *Dēva* (1).

VI

In passing, we notice the various ways of worshipping the Lord with flowers and water, through service and *tapas,* through *Dharma* and self-surrender. Our poet speaks of himself as the slave and follower of the *Bhaktas* of *Śiva* inclusive of *Tirunavukkaracar* and *Tamil̲ Ñāna Campantar* — his leaders (10). The phrase, "*Tamil̲ Ñāna Campantar*" is significant.

VII

This *hymn* shows that in the very act of giving his message of hope to the world at large, our poet has experienced through his inspired music and song a great happiness — the real bliss beyond all states. Our poet, therefore, assures that those who master this *hymn* of a sweet *Tamil̲* song will remain for ever in that self-same state of supreme divine bliss, beyond all worlds (10).

CHAPTER LXV

TIRUVOṞṞIYŪR

(*Hymn* 91)

I

The poet returns from his pilgrimage to the north back to the *Tamiḻ* country. He comes and stays at *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr,* probably, still not deciding to go back to his original place of activity, *viz., Tiruvārūr.*

II

This *hymn* may be taken as an *'akapporuḷ'* song, a dramatic speech, by one of the damsels falling in love with the usual *Bhikṣāṭana* form of the Lord. The verse No. 4 is specific.

> *"Eṉṉa teḻilum niṟaiyum kavarvāṉ*
> *Puṉṉai malarum puṟaviṟ ṟikaḻum*
> *Taṉṉai muṉṉam niṉaikkat taruvāṉ*
> *Uṉṉap paṭuvāṉ Oṟṟi yūrē"* (4).

"It is He who steals away my beauty and my moral firmness and self-control. He shines in the sylvan tract where blooms the *'puṉṉai'* tree. He gives Himself away to be thought of, by His lovers, before everything. He is the One to be remembered. His abode is *Oṟṟiyūr"* (4).

Verse No. 6 speaks of the Lord as, "He who is possessed of me". In other verses, this idea of the damsels falling in love with the Lord is conveyed in the third person. "He is the Lord of the red hue who steals the hearts of doll-like damsels playing with the ball and the parrot. (Others take the *pāvai* as referring to the Mother). He is our Lord and Sovereign. His abode is *Oṟṟiyūr"* (2). (*'Iṭampōl'* is the reading now found. Perhaps it ought to be *'iṭam pōṉm'*).

The *Bhikṣāṭana* form is directly suggested by verse No. 5. "He catches hold of the serpents with hood. He is the great one. He, surrounded by the *gaṇas,* holds up the skull and steals the alms given by the damsels of slender waist." .

"He is of the coral-form praised by many beautiful damsels looking like the peacocks with their spread out tails and adorning their hands with bangles" (8).

III

The other *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord are also suggested — the company of the Mother (3), the covering of the elephant skin (3), the mat-lock whereon creeps the crescent moon (3), the battle axe (6), the milk white sacred ash (6), the flag of the bull, (6), the *Vēdic* song (6), the destruction of the three cities (7), the white bull (7), (The last two lines of verse 7 are reminiscent of *Campantar's* verse *"Naṉṟuṭaiyāṉai . . . . . . Naṟaiveḷḷēṟu oṉṟuṭaiyāṉai"*) and the crushing down of *Rāvaṇa* (9).

Bhikṣāṭana begs for the soul and the love of His loving followers to save them and to relieve them of their *Karmas* and miseries. The idea of the Lord curing us of our *karma* runs through the whole of the *hymn*. "It is the temple of Him who removes the *Karmas* amassed by those who roam about praising Him and in singing songs on Him" (1). "He is the One who cuts away the *kārmic* bond or fetters of those who take refuge in Him" (6). "He is the great Lord best fitted to destroy the *karmas*" (7). "He is One who removes the *karmas* of all those in this world" (8). "He is the One who cures us of all the *karmas* which inflict us" (9).

IV

The joy of this freedom from *kārmic* fetters experienced by the poet as he sings this *hymn* inspires him to assure those who learn and sing this *hymn* that their *karmas* also will pass away, (10), this *hymn* sung by *Ūraṉ* on *Oṟṟiyūr* (10), that *Oṟṟiyūr* on the seacoast almost on the waves which dash against the city during the period of tides (2), the waves which roll and push each other and roam about on the beach (3, 8, 9), the waves which drive to the beach the ships and boats which are seen at a distance. (1). Incidentally the name of the place is probably explained as *"Ōtam oṟṟum tiraivāy Oṟṟiyūrē* — the place at the mouth of the waves of the sea dashing against it" (9).

CHAPTER LXV (a)

TIRUNĀṬṬUTTOKAI (*Hymn* 12)

TIRU IṬAIYĀṞṞUTTOKAI (*Hymn* 31)

ŪRTTOKAI (*Hymn* 47)

I

In connection with the Temple cult, one may bring together for study here alone the three *hymns,* probably, though not belonging to this period, giving the names of the holy places, *hymns* which *Cēkkiḻār* does not mention and which, therefore, we cannot in his scheme assign to any particular period of our poet's life. As *Iṭaiyāṟṟuttokai* mentions *Iṭaiyāṟu,* it must have been composed and sung when the poet visited the places north of *Kāviri. Ūrttokai* and *Tirunāṭṭuttokai* mention *Ciṅkaṭi* and *Vaṉappakai* respectively as the poet's daughters and, therefore, must have been composed in the period succeeding his marriage.

II

One of the *hymns* is *Tirunāṭṭuttokai* (*H.* 12), the *hymn* giving the *Nāṭus* in which the respective holy places are situated. But this is not a correct label for the *hymn* as it does not mention all the respective *Nāṭus* for all the holy places mentioned. The other *hymn* is *Ūrttokai* (*H.* 47)—a *hymn* giving the names of cities of holy places. The third is *Iṭaiyāṟṟuttokai* (*H.* 31)—the *hymn* giving the names of holy places, where, however, every verse ends with the words '*Ūr Eytamāṉ Iṭaiyāṟu Iṭai Marutē*'—'The city of the Lord is *Iṭaimarutu* in *Eytamāṉ Iṭaiyāṟu*'. This must have been sung when the poet visited this holy place. *Iṭaiyaṟu* is the doab or the place between the two rivers and we have very many cities so named. This *Iṭaiyāṟu* is famous from the times of the *Caṅkam* age (*Akanāṉūṟu,* S. 141, l. 23 gives the name of this place, *Iṭaiyāṟu*), having been the favourite resort of the *Cōḻas.* To distinguish it from other *Itaiyāṟus* (Inscriptions speak of one in Trichy District; 42/1913 mentions *Iṭaiyāṟu* in *Rājāsraya Vaḷanāṭu*)—this has been called *Eytamāṉ Iṭaiyāṟu,* whose significance or correct reading however is not clear—perhaps it is within the

Ōymāṉ Nāṭu. (The interpretation '*Eytu A(m)māṉ Iṭaiyāṟu*'—'*Iṭaiyāṟu* reached by the Lord' is too artificial; for we find this phrase in every one of the verses suggesting that the whole phrase forms the names of the place). Inscriptions speak of the Temple here as *Tirumarutan tuṟai* (146/1908). In keeping with this tradition, our poet speaks of the temple as *Iṭaimarutu.*

III

Maṇḍalams are kingdoms or *Rāṣtrams*—later on becoming Provinces of the Empires. *Viṣaya* was the greater political unit. Toṇḍai Maṇḍalam was divided into *Kōṭṭams. Kōṭṭams* probably mean the fortresses, the centres of all activities, which later on became the temples. We have *Vaḷanāṭus* in the *Cōḻa* country in the later *Cōḻa* period which were units greater than the *Nāṭus* or districts. *Kōṭṭams* were bigger units than the *Nāṭus.* As the *Nāṭṭuttokai* mentions *Kūṟṟam* in the place of *Nāṭu,* these two may be taken as equivalents. *Kūṟṟam* literally means a division and this name for the division of a country is as old as the *Caṅkam* Works according to the commentaries (*Puṟanāṉūṟṟu urai* mentions *Muttūṟṟukkūṟṟam* and *Miḻalaikkūṟṟam* in verse 24; *Cintāmaṇi,* S. 1143 mentions *Kūṟṟam*). But in this very *hymn,* one has *Veṇṇikkūṟṟam* and also *Veṇṇi Nāṭu,* which are not synonymous and, therefore, are two different places. In the *hymn Nāṭṭuttokai,* our poet mixes up the *Nāṭu* as *Viṣaya* such as *Īḻa Nāṭu* (7), *Cōḻa Nāṭu* (7) with the *Nāṭu* as District such as *Marukal Nāṭu* (1), *Koṇṭal Nāṭu* (2).

The *Nāṭu* is mentioned with reference to some at least of the cities to distinguish the latter from other cities of the same names lying within the area of other *Nāṭus* or districts. There were for instance, two *Miḻalai,* one in *Veṇṇi Nāṭu* (5), and the other in *Miḻalai Nāṭu* (5). In other cases, the description suggests that a district came to be named after its important city or holy place—*Marukal Nāṭu* after its city *Marukal* (1), *Koṇṭal Nāṭu* after its city *Koṇṭal* (2), *Kuṟukkai Nāṭu* after its city *Kuṟukkai* (2), *Veṇṇikkūṟṟam* after its city *Veṇṇi* (3), *Miḻalai Nāṭu* after its city *Miḻalai* (5), *Nāṅkūr Nāṭu* after its city *Nāṅkūr* (4), *Naṟaiyūr Nāṭu* after its city *Naṟaiyūr* (4), *Poṉṉūr Nāṭu* after its city *Poṉṉūr* (6), *Puricai Nāṭu* after its city *Puricai* (6) *Vēḷūr Nāṭu* after its city *Vēḷūr* (8), and *Viḷattūr Nāṭu* after its city *Viḷattūr* (8). In a third set of cases the name of the *Nāṭu* in the wider sense of a kingdom is given for purposes of description. *Māntōṭṭam* is said to be in *Īḻa Nāṭu* (7); *Rāmēc-*

curam in *Teṉṉāṭu* (7); *Turutti* in *Cōḻa Nāṭu* (7). In *Ūrttokai* (*H.* 47) also, there are some names of *Nāṭus*, though the name *Nāṭu* does not occur. *Koṅkiṟkuṟumpiṟ Kurakkuttaḷi* (2) is the temple at *Kurakkuttaḷi* in the *Kuṟumpu Nāṭu* or district in the *Koṅku Nāṭu* or country.

In this enumeration of these holy places sometimes it is not clear whether we have to take the name as a proper name or merely as a description. In such doubtful cases we may mark it with an interrogation.

Name of the City	*Name of the Nāṭu*	*No. of hymns sung by Campantar*	*No. of hymns sung by Appar*	*No. of hymns sung by Ārūrar*
Kōvalūr	*Naṭu Nāṭu*	1	1	
Tāḻaiyūr				
Takaṭūr				
Takkaḷūr				
Tarumapuram	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Marukal	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	2	1	
Taṇṭantōṭṭam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*			
Taṇṭaṅkuṟai				
Taṇṭalai (*Nīḷneṟi*)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Ālaṅkāṭu	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	1	2	1
Kaḻippālai	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	2	5	1
Koṇṭal				
Kuṟukkai	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*		2	
Mūlaṉūr?				
Nālanūr?				
Kuṟṟālam	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*	2		
Kuraṅkaṇilmuṭṭam	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	1		
Vēlaṉūr?				
Veṟṟiyūr?				
Veṇṇi (*ūr*)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	2	
Tēṅkūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Ciṟṟampalam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*			
Cirāppaḷḷi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Pāṅkūr?				
Kaṭampantuṟai	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*		1	
Pūṅkūr?				
Nāṅkūr				
Naṟaiyūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	3	2	
Kīḻaivaḻi?				
Paḻaiyāṟu (*Vaṭataḷi*)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*		1	

Name of the City	Name of the Nāṭu	No. of hymns sung by Campantar	No. of hymns sung by Appar	No. of hymns sung by Ārūrar
Kiḻaiyam				
Miḻalai				
Teṉṉūr				
Kaimmai?				
Tiruccuḻiyal	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*			1
Tirukkāṉappēṟ (Kāḷaiyārkōil)	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*	1		1
Paṉṉūṟ ?				
Eṉṉūr?				
Poṉṉūr				
Puricai				
Māntōṭṭam	*Īḻa Nāṭu*			
Rāmēccuram	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*	2	1	
Turutti (Kuṟṟālam)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	1
Neyttāṉam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	
Tirumalai				
Kiḷḷikuṭi				
Naṉṉilam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*			1
Paṉaiyūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		1
Kañcaṉūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*		1	
Nellikkā	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Neṭuṅkuḷam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Kaṭaimuṭi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Kaṇṭiyūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Vēḷūr (Kīḻ)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Viḷattūr				
Cōṟṟuttuṟai	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	4	1
Paḻaṉam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	
Pāmpaṇi (Pātāḷic-curam)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Pāmpuram	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Tañcai				
Tañcākkai				
Valañcuḻi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	3	2	
Puṉkūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	1
Āvaṭutuṟai	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	2

In the *Urttokai* the following places are catalogued :

Kāṭṭūr				
Kaṭampūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	2	
Kāṉappēṟūr	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*	1		
Kōṭṭūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Aḻuntūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		

Name of the City	*Name of the Nāṭu*	*No. of hymns sung by Campantar*	*No. of hymns sung by Appar*	*No. of hymns sung by Ārūrar*
Pāṭṭūr?				
Paṉaṅkāṭṭūr	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*			1
Māṭṭūr?				
Kuṟumpu	*Koṅku*			
Kuṟṟālam	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*	2		
Kōṭi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*			1
Vāymūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	2	
Niṟaikkāṭu?				
Miṟaikkāṭu?				
Maṟaikkāṭu	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	4	5	1
Māntuṟai	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Kōṇam?	*Īḻa Nāṭu*			
Tirukkōṇam	*Īḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Ārūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	5	21	8
Aiyāṟu	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	5	12	1
Āḷappur?				
Karukāvūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Pērūr				
Pācūr	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	1	2	
Marukal	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	2	1	
Mākāḷam (Ampar Mākāḷam)?	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*			
Karukal?				
Veṉṉi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	2	
Kāṉūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Veṅkūr				
Viḷamar	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Nāṅkūr				
Tēṅkūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Nallūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	3	2	
Palaṉam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	
Āṉaikkā	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	3	3	1
Aṉṉāmalai	*Naṭu Nāṭu*	2	3	
Turutti	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	1
Neyttāṉam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	
Parutti niyamam (Paruti Niyamam)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Puliyūrcciṟṟampalam (Chidambaram)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	2	8	1
Pukalūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	2	5	1
Mūtur?				
Kaṭavūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	3	1

In the *Iṭaiyāṟṟuttokai* the following places are mentioned:

Name of the City	Name of the Nāṭu	No. of hymns sung by Campantar	No. of hymns sung by Appar	No. of hymns sung by Ārūrar
Muntaiyūr?				
Mutukuṉṟam	*Naṭu Nāṭu*	7	1	3
Kuṟaṅkaṉilmuṭṭam	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	1		
Tiruvārūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	5	21	8
Pantaiyūr				
Paḻaiyāṟu	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*		1	
Paḻaṉam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	
Paiññīli	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	1
Iṭaiyāṟu	*Naṭu Nāṭu*			1
Cuṟṟumūr?				
Cuḻiyal	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*			1
Cōpuram	*Naṭu Nāṭu*	1		
Oṟṟiyūr	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	1	5	2
Ural	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*			1
Kaṭaṅkaḷūr?				
Kārikkarai				
Kayilāyam	*Vaṭa Nāṭu*	2	4	1
Viṭaṅkaḷūr?				
Veṇṇi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	2	
Aṇṇāmalai	*Naṭu Nāṭu*	2	3	
Kaccaiyūr?				
Kāvam?				
Kaḻukkuṉṟam	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	1	1	1
Kārōṇam (*Nākai, Kacci, Kuṭantai*)				
Kaṭavūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	3	1
Vaṭapēṟūr				
Kacciyūr				
Kacci	*Toṇṭai Nāṭu*	4	7	1
Cikkal	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Neyttāṉam	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	5	
Miḻalai (*Viḻi*)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	15	8	1
Niṟaiyaṉūr?				
Niṉṟiyūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	2
Koṭuṅkuṉṟam	*Pāṇṭiya Nāṭu*	1		
Piṟaiyaṉūr?				
Perumūr				
Perumpaṟṟap-puliyūr (*Chidambaram*)				
Maṟaiyaṉūr?				
Maṟaikkāṭu	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	4	5	1

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Name of the City	Name of the Nāṭu	No. of hymns sung by Campantar	No. of hymns sung by Appar	No. of hymns sung by Ārūrar
Valañcuḻi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	3	2	
Tiṅkaḷūr (*of Appūti*)				
Paṭṭiṉam (*Kavirippūmpaṭṭiṉam*)				
Ūr (*Uṟaiyūr*)				
Naṅkaḷūr?				
Naṟaiyūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	3	2	
Nālūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Naṉinālicai?				
Taṅkaḷūr?				
Tēcaṉūṟ?				
Ākkūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Naṉipaḷḷi	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	1
Naḷḷāṟu	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	4	2	1
Pēṟaṉūr				
Peruvēḷūr	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Tēṟaṉūr?				
Kuraṅkāṭutuṟai (South)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1	1	
Kuraṅkāṭutuṟai (North)	*Cōḻa Nāṭu*	1		
Kōval	*Naṭu Nāṭu*	1		
Eytamāṉ Iṭaiyāṟiṭaimarutu				
Iṭaiyāṟu	*Naṭu Nāṭu*			1

IV

In the *Ūrttokai* (*H.* 47) the poet follows a novel way of describing the Lord in relation to the holy places—the Ocean (of love) of *Kāṭṭūr* (1), the Mountain of (good qualities) of *Kaṭampūr* (1), the Sprout of *Kōṭṭūr* (1), the Sovereign of *Aḻuntūr* (1), the Virtuous of *Māṭṭūr* (1), the Bridegroom of *Vāymūr* (2), the Lord father of *Ārūr* (4), the nectar of *Aiyāṟu* (4), the Lord father of *Aḷappūr* (4), the Sheaf (of Grace) of *Karukal* (5), the Sugarcane of *Veṇṇi* (5), the Sugar candy of *Kāṉūr* (5), the Prince of *Nallūr* (6), the Hara of *Āṉaikkā* (7), the Flame of *Turutti* (8), the Wise of *Pukalūr* (9). It is for further research whether these were the descriptions current in that age. As for *Kōṭṭūr,* it is

clear that it was so, for *Ñāna Campantar* has sung of the Lord there aş *'Narkoluntu'* and He is even now called *'Koluntīcar'*.

In the *Nāṭṭuttokai* (*H.* 12), the poet describes the cities as the places where resides the Lord. In the *Iṭaiyāṟṟuttokai* (*H.* 31), the emphasis is on *Iṭaiyāṟṟu Iṭaimarutu* as the city of the Lord though the other cities of the Lord are also mentioned as though by way of contrast.

V

The *Purāṇic* descriptions also occur. In *Ūrttokai* (*H.* 47), we get references to His ear adorned with conch ear-ring (2), the fire in His hand (2, 3), His midnight dance in the graveyard (2), His mat-lock full of water (3), His Crescent moon (5, 9), His *konṟai* garland (7), His banyan tree (8), His destruction of the three cities (9), vanquishment of *Rāvaṇa* (9), and His elephant skin (10).

In the *Nāṭṭuttokai* (*H.* 12), we get references to His detsruction of Death (1), His ride on the bull (1), His three eyes (3, 10), His beautiful ash (3), His company of the damsel of sweet words (5, 9), His long mat-lock (8), His blue throat (8, 10) and His roaming about making serpents dance (10).

In the *Iṭaiyāṟṟuttokai* (*H.* 31), we have references to His bull (2), His sharing His form with the Damsel (2), His waist-string of a serpent (3), His touring life of beggary (4), His feast of poison (7), His banyan tree (7), His conquest of the Sun (7), His flower of *'Erukku'* (7), *Mattam* (7), His crescent moon (9) and His sharing His form with *Viṣṇu* (9) (*Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa*).

VI

The philosophical significance and religious worth of the Lord are also brought out in these *hymns*. The very descriptions already referred to of the Lord in relation to the holy places emphasize His beauty; His Grace, His knowledge and His power. He is the Lord praised by many by those to whom verses overflowed (47 : 1). He is the eternal youth (47 : 2), the most Beautiful One (47 : 2). He occupies the Heart (47 : 3). He is of the Birthless path (47 : 4), *i.e.,* the path leading to the birthless stage. He is the path unknown even to those who have undertaken the duty of ruling and protecting the Heavens (47 : 7). He is the sunshine; He is the air (47 : 8). He is the *Tēcaṉ* (31 : 8), the

shining one or the Lord of the lands. He is *Paramēṭṭi* (31 : 8), the Supreme God; He is One who destroys the sin (31 : 8); *Īcaṉ* (31 : 8) the Lord; *Paramcōti* (31 : 3), the Supreme Light; *Niṟaiyaṉ* (31 : 5) the Perfect One; *Maṟaiyaṉ* (31 : 5) the Lord of knowledge; *Iṟaivaṉ* (31 : 5) the Sovereign or Omnipresent; *Pēṟaṉ* (31 : 9), the Lord of gifts; *Tēṟaṉ* (31 : 9), He who is of clear wisdom. He is *Nampaṉ* (12 : 3) our Lord; and *'Eṅkaḷ Pirāṉ'* (12 ; 6) our Patron.

VII

Our poet's prayers and his expression of his relationship with God are equally significant. "O, Lord of *Kailās*, coming and occupying my mind and continuously reforming it (47 : 8), will you not show yourself for a while unto me, O, father of my father (47 : 3)? Make me sing of you without ever forgetting you (47 : 1)". Apart from these personal requests, as usual, he rises to a universal level and prays in general for all the devotees: "Weed out all the miseries of your servants" (47 : 2). "May you shower your Grace so that there may depart the terrible diseases and *karma* rushing on your servants who have taken refuge in you with all love" (47 : 5, 6, 8). "May you order yourself to be drunk by your devotees" (47 : 5). And our poet praises the devotees: "They are the people who alone leaving their guard over the flesh, love you and realise you". (47 : 7). In *Tirunāṭṭuttokai,* there is no such prayer but there our poet asserts that the Lord is the great light (12 : 9), curing the old *karmas* as soon as one worships Him. He also speaks of God as the great Beginning worshipped by His servants whose is the great order or command (12 : 11). In the *Iṭaiyāṟṟuttokai* he describes *Oṟṟiyūr* as the city where the servants of the Lord flock together (31 : 2). *Tiruvākkūr* is described as belonging to Him who stands for the *karmas* to be erased out (31 : 8). We have seen our poet laying great emphasis on *Tamiḻ* and its great message, giving us a picture of the saints of the *Tamiḻ* land. The poet calls this group, 'Our group!' In describing *Iṭaiyāṟiṭaimarutu,* he speaks of it as *'Tamiḻāṉ eṉṟu pāvikka valla eṅkaḷ' (ūr)* (31 : 6), '(the city of) ours who contemplate on the Lord as the *Tamilian'*.

VIII

The poet speaks of the Lord as occupying the holy cities as His places—*'Iṭaṅkoṇṭatu'* (12 : 1). He speaks of the Lord as

residing there—'Uṟaiyum' (12 : 4), and of frequenting incessantly —'Payilum' (12 : 4). He resides every day—'Nāḷum' (12 : 8). These are the places which He loves—'Kātalikkumiṭam' (12 : 9), 'Mēya' (12 : 10). There are cities which He loves—'Iccai Ūr' (31 : 4); and cities where He is—'Irukkum Ūr' (31 : 7).

In *Ūrttokai* the word, '*Uṟai* (47 : 4, 5, 6) is very often repeated. The Lord enshrining Himself in so many cities is, therefore, spoken of as the Great One who lovingly wanders about in all the *Nāṭus* (12 : 11); He speaks of the Lord as the gem of all the *Nāṭus* (12 : 7). In the *Ūrttokai* our poet states that he contemplated on the idea of the Lord protecting various holy cities and has thus come to sing that *hymn* (47 : 10). The devotees flock there as already stated (31 : 2). This city of temple (*Iṭaiyāṟiṭaimarutu*) is the holy place where the people of clear vision get their mind clarified and are made of firm resolve (31 : 10).

Our poet describes some of the holy places as briefly as possible. In *Marukal*, the plantains are said to ripen and the plantain is the holy plant of this place (12 : 1). *Kaḻippālai* is described as being surrounded by '*kaṇṭal*' a variety of sword flower plant, '*muṇṭal*' a variety of thorny plant—plants which abound on the sea shore, an appropriate description of the city which lies on the sea shore near the back waters (12 : 2).

Mutukuṉṟam is described as '*Muntaiyūr*' (31 : 1), or the ancient city, probably emphasizing the epithet '*mutu*' in the name '*Mutukuṉṟam*'. *Tiruvārūr* is described as that of the Lord who reaches well the city of the heart (31:1). *Tiruvārūr* is often spoken of by the later generation as the very heart of the world and there is also the tradition that the Lord of *Tiruvārūr* is the Lord of the Heart of *Nārāyaṇa* sleeping on the Oceans.

Tiruppuṉkūr is described as the place where in the fields roll and jump the *vāḷai* fish (12 :10). *Āvaṭuturai* is described as the place beautified by the gardens (12 : 10). *Iṭaiyāṟiṭaimarutu* is spoken of as being dashed against by the waters of *Peṇṇār* (31:2). This makes it clear that this holy place must be on the banks of *Peṇṇār* and not in any other place. *Nālūr* is described as '*Naṉi nālicai Nālūr*' (31:6), as the place where resound the four kinds of musical instruments, skin, wind, strings and metal, thus in a way suggesting the explanation of the name *Nālūr*. Or, it may be that '*Naṉi nālicai*' is another place. *Karukāvūr* is described

as lying in a pastoral region surrounded by gardens with overhanging clouds (47 : 4). *Kaṭavūr* also is said to be in a pastoral region full of sound (47 : 9) — *'Kalicēr puṟaviṉ Kaṭavūr'*. In other places the descriptions are merely denoting the direction: *'Paṉaiyūr* is described as the *'Paṉaiyūr'* of the south — *'Teṉ Paṉaiyūr'* and *Kañcaṉūr* of the *North-Vaṭakaṉcaṉur,* (12 : 8) — He speaks of one *'Vaṭa Pēṟūr'* (31: 4).

IX

The poet calls himself *'Ūraṉ, Vaṉappakai appaṉ* and *Vaṉroṇṭaṉ'* (*H.* 12); *"Vaṉroṇṭaṉ* and *Ūraṉ"* (*H.* 31); *'Ciṅkaṭitammāṉ, Ūraṉ, Caṭaiyaṉ Ciṟuvaṉ* and *Aṭiyaṉ'* (*H.* 47). The poet says, 'With a reverential fear *"Nāṇi"* he composed that *hymn, 'Nāṭṭuttokai'* (12: 11). It is not clear what that fear was due to. In that verse, he speaks of the devotees worshipping Him and the fear was due perhaps to the incompleteness of his description and enumeration of the temples he has sung and to the enumeration of the holy places. As already stated, these *hymns* come in the best tradition of the *Śaivite* saints — of *Aiyaṭikaḷ Kāṭavarkōṉ,* who has sung *Kṣēttiraveṇpā,* of *Campantar* who has sung *Kṣettirakkōvai* and of *Appar* who has sung *Kṣēṭṭirakkōvaittiruttāṇṭakam* and *Aṭaivuttiruttāṇṭakam.* These *hymns* emphasise the cult of the temples where the Lord stands as an incarnation of beauty in the *liṅga* and in the images within these temples. These temples are to be looked upon as heavens on Earth. Those who sing of these temples are therefore, worshipping that way experiencing the highest state of bliss or *Paralōka* becoming devoid of all their *karmas,* happy in the thought of their certainty of His Grace. Therefore, our poet assures the readers of his *hymns* the same experiences. With reference to *Nāṭṭuttokai,* he states that those who praise the Lord with the musical song composed by him will reach *Paralōka,* the Supreme Sphere beyond everything else (Instead of *'cērvār Paralōkam'* we have *'Cēr Paralokam'*—12: 11—reminding us of *Tiruvaḷḷuvar's* usage *'Koḷvārum kaḷvarum nēr'* (813) where *'nēr'* stands for *'nērvar'* — an example of the grammarian's *'kaṭaikkuṟai'*). "Where will there be the *karma* of those who speak of *'Iṭaiyāṟiṭaimarutu'* sung by *Ūraṉ* and he continues to assert, "Their own form and personality will become cool, calm and happy" (31: 10). In *Ūrttokai,* he affirms that those who seated in a happy mood, open their beautiful mouths to recite this *hymn* of our poet, will be in *Śivalōka* (47: 10).

PART VI

AWAY FROM OṞṞIYŪR AND CAṄKILI

Introduction

I

The *hymns* sung by our poet after he left *Oṟṟiyūr* deserting *Caṅkili,* and losing his eyesight therefor till he reached *Tiruvārūr,* are included in this part. There is a feeling of sincere repentance and heartfelt sorrow, running through all the *hymns,* though his firm faith and high spirituality stand revealed therein. His great attachment to *Tiruvārūr* shines here as the great guiding light. Perhaps the political complications were getting resolved almost inviting the poet's re-entry into the political arena. The *hymn* on *Nākai-k-kārōṇam* gives us a picture of our poet as a chieftain. Hence that *hymn* also may be included in this part itself, for in the next part there seems to be a change in his life.

II

Our poet exclaims in these *hymns* as follows: "How can I remain separated from the Lord of *Tiruvārūr?*" (*H.* 51); "O, Lord of *Oṟṟiyūr*! Save me from this pain, this disease and this blindness" (*H.* 54); "O, *Pāśupatā,* Great Light! Remove my sufferings" (*H.* 69); "I inquired, are you inside the temple, but alas! the Lord replied, we are here all right; you go your way" (*H.* 89); "Do not great men excuse the faults of their servants, O, Lord of *'Ālaṅkāṭu!* I shall become the slave of your followers" (*H.* 52); Ah! How I, a mere slave, got the eyesight to see the Lord!" (*H.* 61); "When am I to meet my father, my Lord at *Tiruvārūr* with joy! (*H.* 83); "I have seen Him, the Lord of *Āmāttūr;* I sing of Him" (*H.* 45); "Tell me, O, Lord of *Nelvāyil Arattuṟai,* a strategy or a place of escape" (*H.* 3); "Shower your blessings, O, Lord of *Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai,* by assuring me, 'Fear not'. Who is there as my relation or my help if not you ?" (*H.* 70); "I cannot forget, enjoy, know, sing or praise the Lord, nor can I get away from His path or decry Him" (*H.* 74); "O, my Father! Pray, out of pity for me, cry alas!" (*H.* 96); "You birds, beasts and clouds! Are you capable of informing Him of my miserable conditions?" (*H.* 37); "The

followers suffer, O, Lord! You take no note of them" (*H.* 95); "Well, to become prosperous, having heard the story of your Grace I took refuge in your feet" (*H.* 55); "Do not pretend to be a beggar; You must give me gold, horse and food" (*H.* 46).

III

Apart from the holy places which he describes as Heavens on earth, Nature appears to him in the beautiful form of *Pālāṟu, Nivā* River, *Kāviri* River and the sea, *Oṟṟiyūr,* and Negapatam (*Nāka-p-paṭṭiṉam*). *Purāṇic* stories are also mentioned. *Bhikṣāṭana* form has been referred to as the art motif of our poet. He, as the lady-love pines for the Lord. This is the mystic way.

IV

The last verse of each *hymn* as usual describes the goal to be reached, the goal which our poet assures us that those who recite his *hymns* will attain. It is described as *Paragati* above the people of the world, the highest, higher than the high spiritual sphere — the world of good path, the golden *Viṇṇulakam* of the virtuous, the *Amarulaku* reached through the path of *Tapas.* Those who reach the goal are beyond the reach of the cruel *karma* having attained His feet without any falsehood; they are the most virtuous, and they have cut away their fetters of births and deaths, knowing no old age or misery. This goal is sometimes spoken of in terms of sovereignty and rulership as one of becoming the rulers of the *Viṇṇulaku, Viṇṇavar,* of becoming the sovereigns riding on the elephant and ruling the whole of the Heavens. The happiness of Dancing, Singing and Worshipping the feet of the Supreme as a holy community of *Bhaktas* is itself sometimes described as the goal.

V

The cult of *Bhaktas* is thus emphasized. In the *Tiruvalaṅkāṭu hymn,* the poet seeks to become the slave of the followers of *Śiva.* Reference is made to the community of *Bhaktas* as the unique brotherhood. The learned worship the Lord. So, do the poets. *Āgamic* rites are also mentioned. Worship with flowers, music, *Pañcagavya,* especially milk and ghee, worship through poetry, and with *mantras* especially *Añcupadam* or *Pañcākṣara* worship at the three points of the day or *Muccanti* are described as obtaining during the poet's age. We get more details in *Kāñcivaram*

hymns where the poet describes the worship of the Lord, by the Mother — coming near Him, taking refuge in Him, embracing Him in love, praising and worshipping Him and contemplating on Him in joy. Our poet speaks of *Muttar, Cittar* and *Pattar* as the various kinds of the followers of *Śiva* and identifies the Lord with these. *Tapas* is another mode of worship and our poet brings out the importance of the sufferings of the world as a mode of *Tapas*. Our poet refers to *Caṇḍēśvara, Ēyarkōṉ Ñāṉa Campantar, Nāviṉukkaraiyar, Nāḷaippōvār, Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ, Cākkiyar, Kaṇṇappar* and *Kaṇampullar*. To justify this gospel of Grace, our poet speaks of the faults of these saints becoming great merits in the eye of the Lord. He paints the whole world of men, beasts, serpents and all as a happy family of worshippers.

VI

Our poet also emphasizes the harmony of all religions, the six great religions being each one of them according to the fitness and development of the varied souls.

VII

The Lord is herein also praised as *Ārāvamudu, Māsilāmaṇi* and *Maruntu*, thus emphasizing the bliss aspect of the Lord and His being the Supreme value curing us of our great *karma;* for He is described as being responsible for births, deaths, delusions and salvation. Reference is also made to *Sivōham Bhāvana* or contemplation and our poet explains its difficulty by crying out, "I cannot contemplate that I am yourself". The Lord is *Parañcōti, Tūṇṭāviḷakkiṉ cōti*, the eye of those who want to see Him. These emphasize the *Jñāna* or *Cit* aspect of God. Purity and holiness are also asserted. He is the Truth, the Blotless, the Holy. He is the great path, the path of the *Vēdas*.

Though our poet repents, he also asserts, "I do not know what mistakes I have committed". But at the same time in describing the gospel of Grace, he refers to the Lord saving him though he had forgotten the Lord, thus suggesting the '*Mārjāra Kisōra Nyāya*'. In other places he speaks of himself of his own accord, coming to serve the Lord whole-heartedly without his being a hypotheca, a statement which is difficult to be reconciled with the story of the ancient document of slavery of our poet's family. The *Veṇṇeinallūr* incident is found described in detail in this part.

God is described as Truth, Beauty and Goodness. He is the great dancer, the great Artist while He is the very form of Art, *Tamiḻ* and Music. He is our inseparable companion whether on the right or wrong path, always residing in our heart. His *Aṣṭa-mūrta* and His being all kinds of relationship are again and again emphasized. He is *Paśupati, Paramēṭṭi, Karuṇaiccēvakaṉ.* He is also described as "*Maiyaṉ*" a term which is not clear though we had tried to explain. The Lord is everything but if this is forgotten the world becomes a trap of death, miseries and illusion. Our poet, therefore, begins his message with emphasizing the ephemeral nature of this world.

CHAPTER LXVI

TIRUVĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 51)

I

Though this *hymn* is addressed to the Lord of *Tiruvārūr*, it was really sung at *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* where the thought of *Tiruvārūr* came once again to the poet. At *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* he had settled down and married *Caṅkiliyār*. There can be no doubt about this incident of *Caṅkiliyār's* marriage with our poet. But we had already suggested in our study of the number of verses sung by *Ārūrar* that the other details about this marriage we could not be sure of. He must have promised not to part from *Caṅkiliyār*, but under certain circumstances he must have been forced to leave her. The poet must have felt a kind of psychological or spiritual guilt which brought him the blindness of his eyes. He repents and completely surrenders to the Lord which brings a gradual recovery from this sense of guilt and he gradually regains his eyesight, a recovery which is equally spiritual and psychological. It is this spiritual or psychological development of an escape from a sense of guilt which we see in the next fifteen *hymns* sung by our poet whilst going back to *Tiruvārūr*.

According to tradition, our poet married *Caṅkiliyār* whilst *Paravaiyār* was at *Tiruvārūr*. There is no internal evidence in *Ārūrar's* poems to prove this conclusively. There is nothing against a suggestion being made that the marriage with *Caṅkiliyār* was effected after the life time of *Paravai*. In this very *hymn* he refers to the Lord saving him by bestowing upon him *Paravai* (10). But that is referred to in the past tense (10). In this very *hymn* also he refers to the Lord bringing him and *Caṅkiliyār* together (11). In *Hymn* No. 69: 3, he speaks of the Lord depriving him of eyesight because of the *Caṅkili* incident. In *Hymn* No. 45: 4, he refers back to his experience with *Caṅkili*:

Ōrntaṉaṉ ōrntaṉaṉ uḷḷattuḷ lēniṉṟa voṉporuḷ
Cērntanaṉ cērntanan ceṉṟu Tiruvoṟṟi yūrpukkuc
Cārntaṉaṉ cārntaṉaṉ Caṅkili meṉṟōl tatamuḷai
Ārntaṉaṉ ārntaṉaṉ Āmāttūr aiyaṉ aruḷatē".

"I realized that bright reality inside my mind. Reaching that place, I entered into *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr*. Then I embraced *Caṅkili*. That way, I became full of the experience of the Lord's Grace": He thus suggests his experience with *Caṅkili* was a kind of divine experience. It is necessary to read *Cēkkiḻār's* poetry for appreciating this point of view. In his *hymn* on *Tirunākaikkārōṇam* (*H*. 46), where our poet begs of the Lord to give him a horse and scimitar and other paraphernalia of power, he addresses the Lord as one who is the prop unto him and unto *Paravai* and *Caṅkili* (46: 11). That *hymn* may prove that our poet was becoming great politically once again but not that *Paravai* was alive at the time of the *hymn* for admittedly there was no physical relationship even with *Caṅkili* at the time of singing that *hymn* though she was mentioned therein.

Perhaps the political conditions have improved in his favour by the time of his singing this *hymn*. It is also clear that the poet has a special attachment to *Tiruvārūr* temple. Therefore, he feels all the more this kind of ostracism from *Tiruvārūr*.

II

In this *hymn* our poet gives vent to this feeling of separation and exclaims, "For how many days can I live separated from my Lord of *Ārūr ?*" (1). "How can I get on separated from Him ?" (2). "To wither away without His company, in which place shall I live separated from Him ?" (3). "Without His company, in what way shall I live separated from Him" ? (4). "In what capacity shall I live separated from Him ?" (5). "To become what, shall I live separated from Him carrying this body ?" (6). "Without reaching Him, to do what shall I live separated from Him ?" (7). "Forgetting Him thus, to know what, shall I live separated from Him ?" (8). "Leaving Him away, having what shall I live separated from ?" (9). "Alas ! Foolish and poor me ! Shall I live separated from Him ?" (10).

Our poet speaks of his own life in relation to the Lord: "That disease covered me, a sinner, so that I may leave off my love and service unto God. I have now realized the significance of this. I shall go and fall at the feet of the Lord." (1). "Born in this body to suffer here, I am without any sense. Here, thus I was born in this birth of misery and I was suffering to the point of exhaustion" (3). "But He came thus, so that I may not be

exhausted and He saved me" (4). "I have not known that great wealth unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma,* I, of cruel *karma.* I am a stubborn fool; I had not thought of the Lord from the beginning" (5). "He became the seven tunes of music, the fruit of music, the sweet nectar, my friend and companion in my misfeasance. He saved me by making a gift of *Paravai* of the beautiful eyes" (10). "He feasted on poison, giving away the nectar to the *Dēvas.* In a similar way, He considered me, an insignificant being, as of importance, and He, the real Truth, brought me and *Caṅkili* together" (11).

III

Our poet gives expression to his feeling of divine bliss and divine greatness. He addresses the Lord as real nectar *'Ār amudu'* again and again (2, 4). He speaks of the Lord as the pearl, as the precious gem, as the diamond (1), as the rare medicine — *'Arumaruntu'* (4). He is the Lord of qualities possessed by no one else. (5). He is the One who has no other to compare with Himself (5). He is that great path, the beautiful path, that straight path (8), the divine fruit of education (9) (Compare: *'Kaṟṟataṉāl āya payaṉ eṉkol Vāalaṟivaṉ naṟṟāḷ toḻāar eṉiṉ'* — *Kuṟaḷ*: 2). He is One who resides in the heart giving joy to our imagination (9). Our poet calls Him *Śivamūrti* (2).

IV

Our poet also refers to the *Purāṇic* stories about the destruction of *Manmata* (2), the feast of the poison (3), His firelike form (4), the deer held in His hand (4), *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* unable even to know Him through contemplation (5), His destruction of the three cities (6) and the Lord of Death (7), His lightning-like matlock (7), His bull (7), the Absolute worshipped by the people of the Heavens in the ancient path (8), the Lord worshipped in the beautiful path by the Deathless (8) (here also our poet makes a distinction between the *Amarar* and *Vāṉavar*), the upright path of His servants (8), the sprout of the *Dēvas* (8), the Lord with the eye in the forehead (9) and his covering of the elephant skin (12).

V

Our poet describes the place of *Tiruvārūr* as the city where spreads the unique fame of great men and he calls this *hymn* as

his very words uttered by him whilst hankering after the feet of *Śiva* of *Tiruvārūr* (12). He describes himself as *Ārūraṉ, Aṭittoṇṭaṉ, Aṭiyaṉ* (12). He assures those who are masters of this *hymn* that like him feeling elated and beyond the reach of the common men whilst singing this *hymn,* they would also be head and shoulders above the people of this world (12). The last verse reminds us of the tenth verse in *Hymn* No. 86. (*Ūr Ūraṉ* is not clear — 12)—perhaps it means that the poet was visiting shrine after shrine. This term—'*Ūr Ūraṉ*'—occurs also in *Hymn* No. 90: 10 and in *Campantar's hymn* No. 3 : 65 : 2.

CHAPTER LXVII

TIRUVOṞṞIYŪR

(*Hymn* 54)

I

In the previous hymn itself, the poet had resolved to go to *Tiruvārūr*. This should amount to deserting *Caṅkili*. This sense of guilt was there in that *hymn*, but it took the form of condemning himself for having deserted *Tiruvārūr*. Modern psychologists will explain this coming in of the idea of desertion of *Tiruvārūr* instead of *Caṅkili* as the work of the unconscious mind. Whatever that may be, in the present *hymn*, the poet refers to the loss of his eyesight and the sufferings he experienced as a result of *Caṅkili's* incident.

The meaning of this *hymn* is not quite clear in many places probably because we do not know all the details of his life in relation to his love with *Caṅkili*, the details which he probably refers to in this *hymn*. It is a lamentation of his heart. His feelings are confused and that also probably explains the difficulty in understanding this *hymn*. Perhaps the *hymn* has not also come in the original form in which he has sung. But nobody can miss herein the pathos and the sincerity of the poet. Every verse ends with the words, '*Oṟṟiyūr eṉṉum ūr uṟaivāṉē*"—"O, Thou, who livest in the city known as *Oṟṟiyūr*". The rest of the verse expresses the feeling of misery and despair of the poet, all at the same time revealing his complete self-surrender to the Lord.

II

This *hymn* is so much pre-occupied with the personal aspect of the Poet's life that there is not much room for too many references to the *Purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord. Even the few references become one with his lamentations. The reference to the three eyes of the Lord (4) heightens the effect of his lamentation that God should deprive of his eyesight whilst He Himself has an extra eye. The poet speaks of God as being adorned with the honeyed *koṉṟai* flower (6) probably to suggest that the Lord Himself is as much fond of adornments and pleasures. The

poet speaks of the Lord embracing the damsel of the Mountain (8) and crowning Himself with the damsel of the *Gaṅgā* of 1000 faces (*i.e.*, which has a thousand branches) (8). This comes in, as a kind of retort to the possible complaint against the poet's love episodes with *Paravai* and *Caṅkili.* In another place, he addresses the Lord as the author of the *Vēdas* (9), probably suggesting that as an author of the *Vēda,* that regulates justice and spiritual life in this world, the Lord should not have made the poet suffer. The poet speaks of the Lord shining in the beautiful eight forms (2), the five elements, the sun, the moon and the soul. This is probably to suggest that the Lord being thus everything would know all his sufferings without the poet himself giving expression to them; this universal aspect is becoming more and more prominent from here.

In another place the poet speaks of the mat-lock upon which rests the *Ganges* (3). In that context the poet is referring to the Lord as the greatest bliss and describes Him in terms of sweetness, the sweetness of the sugar-cane, sugar-candy and the nectar. In describing the Lord as the sugar-cane, the poet sings, "*Gaṅgai taṅkiya caṭaiyuṭaik karumpē*".—Sometimes the word *'caṭai'* is used for the blades of the members of the grass-family; *c.f., 'Caṭaic cennel'* (*Naḷaveṇpā, Swayam.,* 68); *'Caṭaippul'* (*M.M.,* 331). The sugar-cane with thick lustre of blades may be spoken of as *'Caṭaiyuṭaik karumpu'*. When the blades are green and full of water, one is justified in describing it as "*Gaṅgai taṅkiya caṭaiyuṭaik karumpu*". Thus punning on this phrase, one can make that equally applicable to the Lord and the sugar-cane (*Caṭai* may also mean roots: *Kallāṭam:* 82: 3, when *'Gaṅgai taṅkiya caṭai'* may mean the roots standing inside the *Ganges; i.e.* water).

III

Our poet has found some place for describing the sea at *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr;* that shows his love of Nature. But those descriptions also fit in with the context. The conches and the pearl-oysters and the *'calañcalam'* or the king conch, resound in the sea when the flow of the tides is gathering up diamonds, pearls, gold and gems (3). The rising dark sea thus comes and goes, as it were, in a procession at *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* during the days of tides (3). This description of procession is in keeping with his description of the Lord as the sweetest and as the most precious, the beautiful bridegroom—suggesting a bridal procession. The cool sea drives up

the tides which come and move about at *Tiruvorriyūr* as though in a procession (9).

IV

One may now turn to the lamentations of the poet making as best of the meaning as one can. "With this body of dirt, I took refuge in your beautiful feet; if even that is something that I should suffer, O, Lord! (You know that) people of the world receive the (goat's) milk, even though it means removing with their hands its dung. Even if I do wrong I never wrong your beautiful feet. Even if I fall slipping down, I know of no utterance except that of your beautiful name. O, pray tell me, any medicine for pouring into my eye" (1).

"I am a miserable being. I came to be born. I became your servant because of loving *Caṅkili.* What can this slave of yours explain — to do what ? Though I am passionate, I shall never be false to your beautiful feet. Even if I turn false to the service of your beautiful feet, I had sworn to accept all that you might do for me" (2).

"You are the sugar-cane, the candy, the prop for many, a gooseberry (*Nelli*) in the hands of your followers, the nectar within such a fruit. To whom shall I explain my miseries?" (3).

"It is not a relationship by birth (*Īṉṟu*), or by marriage or adoption (*Koṇṭatu*). Those who appear at the time of need, perform acts of mercy, they are the people whose wealth is love. What does it matter if they are anything? If people say anything (scandalous against them) you do not say, hard words to them. It may also mean, 'It is not a relationship by birth; but what does it matter if those who love you are anything ? You appear and bless them. They praise you. You do not say anything against them — (but things are different for me). You are the Lord of three eyes and in spite of it, if it is justice and a proper rendering of an account that you should take away the eyes of your slave, bless me at least with a suitable walking stick" (4).

"I try to get into the path. I cannot contemplate that I am yourself. (This refers to *Sivōham bhāvanā* — or of identity). Like the water caught in an eddy, I whirl round and round and my mind whirls round; save me from anyone dragging me quickly

in haste, catching hold of my walking stick, even as he will, a dog, tethered to a pole. Pray, do unto me what is merciful." (5).

"I was caught in the net of the beautiful deer-like eyes of the damsels and I suffered. I was afraid of the cruel *karma* which had come to my share. I have not contemplated on your good acts and good qualities. Even I, desire, however, but only this much. Pray, bless me by relieving me of all my defects so that I may not get immersed in hell whilst alive". (Blindness is referred to as hell on earth) (6).

"I shall never forget you. I shall not think of other *Dēvas*. I cannot live with others. I am a fool, who though the recipient of your blessing, still suffers as though he has not been. I fail to understand what mistake I committed. How am I, your slave, responsible for your hating me thoroughly? I do not forget you. Pray, bless me, by removing the physical and mental diseases to which I have been subjected. (The words, '*Uṟṟa nōy uṟupiṇi*' are sometimes interpreted to mean, 'the past and future sufferings') (7).

"You embraced the Damsel of the mountain; without even thinking of this, you crowned yourself with the damsel of the *Ganges* of 1000 faces (branches). In this way if I begin speaking of you, it is possible even for your slave to go on retorting. O, my mind! what can you do sitting and withering away like this? Suffering thus and becoming afraid of the cruel *karma* inflicting me, if I become sulky (with the Lord), can any benefit come out of this?" (8).

"O, Thou strong one, the gem, the bridegroom, you have become unto me the *Saturn* entering the constellation of Maka (Saturn entering Maka forebodes all kinds of calamities according to Indian astrology). If I say anything to the womenfolk, at home, I cannot bear them replying, 'Don't call us, get away, you blind fool!' O, Lord of three eyes! how can I live, losing my eyes in my face, O, thou who hast given out the *Vēdas?* Is this fair?" (9).

V

Though our poet, in some places, explains his passion, it ought not to be taken as referring to anything immoral or unlawful because he himself asks the Lord in the secrecy of his isolation, "I do not know, what mistake I have committed" (7).

In the 10th verse he describes himself as the young man, who is great for his good conduct and behaviour who had mastered as a scholar through daily studies and recitation, the four *Vēdas* and their subsidiary arts praised by the world. He calls himself, *Vaṉṟoṇṭaṉ,* and *Ūraṉ.*

VI

After giving expression to his sufferings, the poet must have felt a joy that he has attained the divine bliss of the goal he wanted to attain, the goal beyond all other goals, the '*paragati*'. Therefore, he assures those who are masters of these ten songs of him that they will also attain, as sure as anything, the supreme goal.

CHAPTER LXVIII

TIRU MULLAIVĀYIL

(*Hymn* 69)

I

The poet on his way to *Tiruvārūr* passed through *Tirumullai-vāyil,* which had grown into importance in the *Pallava* Period, thanks to the tradition, that a *'mullai'* creeper wound round the legs of the state elephant of the *Pallava* and that the Lord became manifest to the *Pallava* for enabling that king to receive the infinite bliss — a tradition referred to by our poet in verse 10.

II

This city is described as being on the northern bank of *Pāli* or *Pālāṟu* (5). But now, *Pālāṟu* runs many miles south of this place. Our poet describes the *Pālāṟu* in floods, carrying the roots of the sandal tree, the logs of *'akil',* the peacock tail, the elephant tusk, heaps of pearls and heaps of creeper-like corals and coming down pushing everything in front (5). Now the *Kuṭatalaiyāṟu* alone runs at a little distance.

The poet, after he has sung the precious *hymn,* had his peace of mind restored though his miseries have not disappeared altogether. The metre of the verse is the traditional metre of seven feet of the scheme, *'viḷa', 'mā', 'viḷa', 'mā', 'viḷa', viḷa', 'mā'.* In the last line of every verse (except the fourth verse), the last five metrical feet and in the words, *'paṭutuyar kaḷaiyāy pācupatā parañcuṭarē* — 'Weed out the sufferings that inflict me, O, Supreme Light.' O, *Pācupatā!*" (On the word *'Pācupatā',* please see: Vol. II). Perhaps *'Mullaivāyil'* was an important place where assembled the members of the *Pāśupata* school as their central place of influence). One can appreciate the poet who is now blind addressing the Lord as the Supreme Light.

III

Our poet also refers in this *hymn* to the *Tiruveṇṇeinallūr* incident: "O, our Lord! that day at *Veṇṇeinallūr* you saved me and made me a dog, your servant" (8).

IV

He gives expression to his subjective experience of the Lord and his inner life; "Thinking that your famous feet are to me

the Beauty, the true Reality, and Wealth (Wealth as representing the inspiration for activity and conduct is goodness. Thus God is Beauty, Truth and Goodness — the three eternal values.), doing all that is not proper and flaring up in resentment, I showed no respect to anyone. I roamed about obstinate this way. O, Lord! O, Supreme Light! Weed out my miseries that inflict your slave that praises you with the words of his tongue" (1). "Weed out the miseries that inflict your slave who out of love had sung the great fame of yours" (2). "O, Lord of that great quality which removed my eyes because of *Caṅkili!* Weed out the miseries that inflict your slave" (3). "Bless me, who out of love for your fame sing in *Tamiḻ* of varied beauty" (4); (this ending varies from the endings in other verses). "Weed out my miseries, destroying the fetters" (5). "O, Munificent Patron! Who else can be blessed with all that I have been blessed with? Even if I speak, and commit mistakes, it is your policy to accept all these as good qualities. Because of this ideal of yours, I had committed many excesses. I am your slave; I have no other support. Weed out the miseries which had come to inflict me" (6). "Night and day, I performed your services. Weed out my miseries" (7). I have roamed about in quest of you and you are the precious gold that I have found." "Weed out the miseries your slave is suffering from" (8). (This refrain is repeated in verses 9 and 10).

V

The description of *Tirumullaivāyil* shows, the poet has now become extrovert. There is a sweet fragrance there (1). It is a place surrounded by garden of *champaka* groves (3), a place of fields of paddy full of beauty and goodness, wherein roam about the crabs usually sleeping on the beautiful and comfortable seat of lotus flowers, sleeping to the lullaby sung by the bees beautified by dots and lines, bees which have become intoxicated with the fresh smelling honey of the fields yielding gold (4). It is a place embraced by thick groves where does not cease the rare dance of the damsels of beautiful carp-like eyes, of gem-like red lips, of white teeth, of black and long tresses of hair and of a suffused beauty of the peacock (7). The waters full of waves or ripples surround this holy place (11). Apart from these natural beauties, it is a place of man's art for it is surrounded by golden palaces (8). It is also the place where throng the *Dēvas,* who cry to Him and exclaim 'Where are you?' (2) for the Lord is the king of the *Dēvas* (3). It is also a place where the good men praise Him (10).

VI

The *Purāṇic* stories are also referred to: His dance in the presence of the Mother (2), the Lordship over the *Vēdas* (3), the flaying of the skin of the elephant (3), the destruction of the three cities (6), the swallowing of the poison (8), the destruction of the Lord of Death rushing on the young one (*Mārkkaṇḍēya*) (9), the Lord growing up taller and taller (as a pillar of Fire) to frighten *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (11).

VII

The Lord is called '*Nampaṉ*' — 'Our man' (8), 'He of *Mullaivāyil*' (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), or 'the wealth of *Tirumullaivāyil*' (7, 9, 11), 'the Lord of *Tirumullaivāyil*' (10), 'the Lord of the beautiful or loving eyes' (2), the most beautiful (2), the meaning and significance of the *Vēdas* (2), '*Cittaṉ*' (9), 'the wise and the learned', '*Paṭṭaṉ*' (9), 'the learned Doctor who is the author of the rich *Vēdas*', '*Palkalaipporuḷ*' (10), 'the meaning and significance of all arts', '*Paimpoṉ*' (8) 'the fresh gold', '*Māsilāmaṇi*' (5), 'the blotless gem, (we know we have noted our poet has partiality for this gem — the name of the deity of this temple)', '*Śambhu*' or One who creates happiness (8), '*Iṟaivaṉ*', the Sovereign (10), '*Nātaṉ*' the Lord (10). Thus the aspects of Beauty, Value, Knowledge, Bliss and Power of the Lord are emphasized, at the same time emphasizing his nearness to us. The *hymn* is important as giving us the doctrine of Grace that the Lord loves our faults (6) (even as the cow loves the dirt on its calf).

VIII

Our conclusion, that the poet has regained his mental peace and equanimity is confirmed by what our poet assures his readers. He has himself experienced a calm and cool mind whilst singing this *hymn*, when all mental agitations thus ceased, he must have felt transported to regions of the higher beings completely obvious of the miseries of the world inflicting him in the form of grey hair, wrinkles, old age and other sufferings. He, therefore, assures those who recite these five and five verses of this garland of words of '*Nāval Ārūraṉ*' and who are capable of praising the Lord with a calm and cool mind, that they will attain the sovereignty over the people of Heavens without any grey hair, wrinkles, old age and other sufferings — a kind of existence which is considered heavenly.

CHAPTER LXIX

TIRUVEṆPĀKKAM

(*Hymn* 89)

I

This is the place which our poet visits next. The place is called *Tiruveṇpākkam* and from the *hymn* we find that the temple was called *Veṇkōyil* (verse 10), probably because of the white colour of the plaster work. The verses of this *hymn* are in '*koccaka*' form, of four lines each of four feet of *kāyccīr*'. Every fourth line ends with the words '*Uḷōmpōkīr eṉṟāṉē*' as its last two feet. In the third line, the poet raises the question, "Are you here inside this temple?" and it is to this he says he got the reply, "*Uḷōm pōkīr*" — 'We are here, you get away or you go your way'. The whole *hymn* is a complaint against this Lord and every verse elaborates this complaint: "I thought that great people would excuse faults and under that impression I committed mistakes; but without caring for the scandal, you have blinded my eyes." I asked, "Are you in the temple?" and the Lord remaining there inside said, "We are here, you go your way" (1).

II

"I know neither the intermediate nor the initial. I declare, I cry, My Lord, I take refuge in you. Without caring for the facts, that we are your slaves and your refugees, Ye, my Lord, said 'You may go" (2). "I know not how to act. Even if I, your false slave commit any mistake, saying, *i.e.*, pretending that your beautiful feet are my refuge, is it not necessary that you should excuse me?" When I asked, "Are you here?" the Lord who is capable of sympathizing with me, and helping me to attain salvation, said, "We are here, you may go" (3).

"O, Our Prince! Are you here?" — thus as soon as I asked Him, He replied, "We are here, you go your way" (4). He was there moving on the bull, by the side of the Mother, and I His slave inquired of Him in a high pitch, and He at once replied, "We are here, you may go" (5). "You have blinded the apple of my eye. Are you here?", I asked, and He replied, "I am here, you may go" (6). "O, Lord of the throat, blue like the blue gem, served by the *bhaktas* and the followers of the *Vēdas!* Are you here?", I asked, and He said, "We are here, you may go" (7). The Lord of *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* said, "We are here, you may go" (8).

"Are you here, inside this white temple?", I asked, and the Lord blessed me with a walking stick as a prop and said, "We are here, you go your way" (10).

III

In two verses, our poet refers to the *Caṅkili* incident. "I told you to go and be under the *'makiḻam'* tree. Without my knowledge you said that the vow should be taken under the *'makiḻam'* tree. You are so capable, O, Great Lord"! "Are you here?", I asked, and He as though He had sighted His enemies said, "We are here, you go your way" (9). (This verse, it was suggested by us might not have originally been in the *hymn* — Vol. I). "You have given me *Caṅkili,* shining like a deer and you blessed in such a way that the good effects flowing therefrom became manifest" (10).

IV

Our poet refers also to some *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord: His long dangling ear-ring (1), His deer (1), His bull (2), His poisonous serpent (2, 3), His white sacred ash (2), His tiger's skin (2), His covering of an elephant skin (4), His throat with the poison (4, 7, 8), the skull (*Kāpāli*) (4), His beautiul red form, like the coral (4), His company of the Mother (4), His shining golden *koṉṟai* on the mat-lock (5, 6, 9), His destruction of *Maṉmata* (6), His *Ganges* on His crown (6), the serpent on His waist (7) and His dance on the burning ghat with the Mother surrounded by the ghost (8).

V

Though the *hymn* begins with a complaint and expresses the miserable feeling of the poet at the Lord curtly replying as though to an enemy that he should get away, yet in the end our poet gets a walking stick to lean on and walk. This must have inspired the poet with hope and our poet says he has sung this poem in love of the Lord since he is passionately attached to Him.

Our poet describes himself as one who has the name of *'Śiva of Tiruvārūr'* which we had explained as referring to the first part of his name *Ārūraṉ*. The gift of a walking stick — our poet would have considered the gift from any one as the gift from the Lord — makes him feel that he has been relieved of all his *karmas* and that they would afflict him no more. That is why he assures those who masters the *Tamiḻ* of his, that the cruel *karma* will never come near them.

TIRUVĀLAṄKĀṬU

(*Hymn* 52)

I

In this *hymn*, the refrain of the verses is "*Ālaṅkāṭā uṉ aṭiyārk kaṭiyēṉ āvēṉē*" — 'I shall become the slave of your slaves'. Elsewhere we have explained the significance of the cult of the *bhaktas*. *Ālaṅkāṭu* is always coupled with *Paḻaiyaṉūr*. *Ālaṅkāṭu* is probably the forest of banyan trees and the temple itself must have been once upon a time, one of the banyan trees. The city nearby came to be known after one '*Paḻaiyaṉ*' perhaps a chieftain. *Paḻaiyaṉ* is the name of a chieftain as is made clear by the *Caṅkam* poetry which speaks of '*Mōkūrp Paḻaiyaṉ*[1] and other chieftains. Our poet has regained his mental equipoise and as of yore refers to the *Purāṇic* stories in detail: His company of the Mother (7); His waist-band of a serpent (2), His ornament of bones (3), His destruction of three cities (3, 6, 7), His blue throat (4), His matlock (5), His *Ganges* (7), His bull (7), His form of fire worshipped by *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8), His dance in the company of the ghosts and the burning ghat (9).

II

The poet repeatedly addresses the Lord as *Paramā* in seven verses (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10) out of ten and he also describes this supreme being above all others as curing the *karmas* (3, 4, 7, 8) which cannot be otherwise removed, the *karmas* in which we are submerged from very ancient times ('*Pāṉṭāḻ viṉai*' in the third verse is the same as '*Paṉṭāḻ viṉai*' of the seventh verse except for the lengthening of the vowel in the former case) the *karmas* which become a void. The other idea which is emphasized in this *hymn* that He is prayed by many, comes uppermost in our poet's mind when he thinks of taking refuge in the *bhaktas* — 'the *pattar palar pōṟṟum paramā*' (1) — 'O, Supreme Being, praised by many *bhaktas*'; '*Paṇṇā ricaika ḷatu koṇṭu palaru mēttum Paḻaiyaṉūr Aṇṇā*' (6) — 'O, Lord! praised by many with music full of melody', '*Paṉmā malarka ḷavaikoṇṭu palaru mēttum Paḻaiyaṉūr Ammā*' (9) — 'O, Lord! praised by many worshipping you with many

1. *Maturaik kāñci*: *l.*, 508.

valuable flowers'. *'Pattar cittar palarēttum paramaṉ paḻaiyaṉūr mēya Attaṉ'* (10) — 'the Lord being praised by many *bhaktas* and *siddhas*'. In this way our poet has suggested the various kinds of worship with flowers (9), with music (6), and with praises (9). He refers to another form of worship as well: *'Pālaṅkāṭi, neyyāṭi'* (5) — 'the Lord who bathes in milk and ghee'. The good effects of such a worship is also referred to: *"Toḻuvār taṅkaḷ tuyar tīrppāy"* (3) — 'You are the Lord who removes the miseries of those who worship you'. There is also the worship according to *Vēdas;* for, "He is the path of the *Vēdas*" — *"Vēda neṟiyāṉē"* (7).

III

The poet also enumerates in a way the various kinds of worshippers and he sometimes calls the Lord Himself after the names of these followers *"Muttā* (1), *Cittā* (1), *Pattā* (1)" — 'the freed One, One who had achieved and reached the goal, One who loves the Lord.' These terms are thus used as the names of the Lord Himself (1). He speaks of the worshippers of the Lord as *Pattar* (1, 10), *Cittar* (10). The Lord is not only *'Muttā'* but confers *'Mutti'* (1). He is not only a *'Siddha'* but shows the ways of *'siddhi'* (1). He is not only a *'Bhakta'* but One praised by *bhaktas* (1). He is by nature a freed soul, not one who is freed — that is why He is *Muttā;* the term *Bhakta* we had already referred to as the name of the Lord. He calls the Lord *'Tēvar Ciṁkamē'* (1), 'the Lord of the *Dēvas*' which must have been suggested the name of the *Pallava* chief *Rājasiṁha,* the contemporary (king) of *Ārūrar.* In this *hymn* also the poet calls the Lord, the good flame of the Light which requires no kindling — *'Tūṇṭā viḷakkiṉ naṟcōti'* (3). He calls Him *'Tattuvaṉ'* (8), the fundamental element of the thing in itself. The Poet who has lost his eyesight addresses the Lord as the eye of the world which with all His thought is concentrated on protecting the world — *"Kaṇṇāyulakam kākkiṉṟa Karuttā"* (6). The Lord is perfect, impossible to be perfected any more — *"Tiruttalākātāy"* (6). Our poet feels that not only he, but all his ancestors were the slaves of the Lord — *"Entāy entai Perumāṉē"* (6). *"Emmāṉ entai mūttappaṉ ēḻēḻ paṭikāl emaiyāṇṭa Pemmāṉ"* (9) — We have referred to this service of the Lord through seven generations.

IV

The first foot of every fourth line, as usual in our poet's *hymns,* consists of words expressing that God is the real relation-

ship of all kinds. The words which we found in other *hymns* are repeated here: *Attā* (1), *Aiyā* (2), *Āṇṭā* (3), *Arivē* (4), *Aṇṇā* (6) *Aṇṭā* (7), *Āḷvāy* (8), *Ammā* (9).

V

Our poet also expresses certain aspects of his life in relation to the Lord. "I acted falsely and roamed about going more and more away from you. You came here as the truth, and preventing me from thus getting away from you, you saved me, O, Truth! the true principle or the truthful" (2).

"I was caught in the trap of the beautiful damsels of eyes shining like those of the deer. My intelligence became deluded and I lost my intelligence" (4). "I was caught in the net of the damsels of wide eyes flashing like the spear. I forgot you" (5). The unconscious probably is suggesting that the description of *Caṅkili* is after all just because he has escaped from the feminine trap. Therefore, these references ought not to be taken as referring to any immoral life of the poet. We will see the poet coming back from this confused state of mind when he reaches mental equipoise at *Tiruvāmāttūr* (45) where he explains his true and divine relationship with *Caṅkili*.

VI

The poet in this *hymn* also refers to the precious worth and lovable character of the Lord and in his usual way he describes the Lord as the gem, the pearl and the emerald (5). Experiencing the Lord as such when he takes refuge in the *bhaktas* he is so overpowered by this joy that he dances and sings completely surrendering himself through worship to the feet of the Lord (10). He says, "He came to love the service alone, he, the young one *Ūraṉ*, the famous young one whom *siddhas* ever keep in their mind and he has sung these shining *Tamiḻ* verses (10). Therefore, he assures those who will read these *Tamiḻ* verses of his song and dance overpowered by this experience of the *hymn* will surely worship the feet of the Supreme Being (10). Such a worship itself is a state of Heaven.

TIRUVĒKAMPAM

(*Hymn* 61)

I

"*Ēkampam*" is considered to be the *Tamiḻ* form of the Sanskrit word "*Ēkāmram*", the unique mango tree, probably the old temple of *Kāñcī* receiving all worship, the Lord there being known as *Ēkāmranātha, Ēkampavāṇaṉ* or *Kampaṉ*. The mango tree is even now within the temple premises. But by the time of *Nampi Ārūrar,* the temple has become of great importance to *Śaivites. Mahēndra Varma,* in his *Matta Vilāsam,* refers to the *Kāpāli* coming from the temple of *Ēkāmranātha.* The *Kāmakkōṭṭam* or the temple of the Mother Goddess is important in this city. The name of the deity of this temple had assumed the *Tamiḻ* form *Kampaṉ* which has become the proper name of the people of the age like *Kalikkampaṉ, etc.*

II

On reaching *Kāñcī,* on his way back to *Tiruvārūr,* the poet is said to have got back the sight of one eye. At this partial recovery of the eyesight, the poet exclaims in joy, "*Kāṇak kaṇ aṭiyēṉ peṟṟavāṟē*"—"Ah! how I, a slave, got the eye to see the Lord" (1-10).

The last half of every fourth line of this verse ends with the refrain of an exclamation '*Kāṇak kaṇ aṭiyēṉ peṟṟavāṟē.* The rest of the verses piles up the description of the Lord in the accusative case. In the last verse, the poet states that this *hymn* was sung by him—*Nāvalārūraṉ*—in good *Tamiḻ* expressing the idea that he as a slave has been blessed with an eye to see the Lord.

III

The *Purāṇic* descriptions which imply the Grace of God showered on His followers and removing at the same time the obstructions in the way are referred to—the Lord's feast of the

poison (1, 5), the worship by the Mother Goddess, a worship which is repeated in every verse, His destruction of the Lord of Death (4), and the three cities (3, 9) and *Kāma* (3) and *Dakṣa* (9), His bull (11), His eight arms (9), His flaying of the elephant (3), His mat-lock (2), His *koṉṟai* flower (4), His ear with the *kuṇḍala* (4), His battle-axe (5), His crescent moon (6) and His *Ganges* (6).

IV

The Lord is referred to as '*Koṟṟavaṉ*' (11)—the victorious, '*Kampaṉ*' (1-11) the term already explained, '*Kūttaṉ*' (11) the dancer, '*Ādi*' (1) the beginning of everything, '*Vittakaṉ*' (5), the wise or mysterious person, '*Śiva*' (8), the name so dear and sacred to the *Śaivites*, '*Dēvadēvaṉ*' (6) the Lord of the *Dēvas*, '*Niṭkaṇṭakaṉ*' (9) the One who is just and strict and '*Īcaṉ*' (10) the Lord.

The name '*Kampaṉ*' is found used with various significant adjectives '*Periyakampaṉ*' (3), '*Nallakampaṉ*' (5), '*Kaḷḷakkam-paṉ*' (10): *Kampa* the Great; *Kampa* the Good; and *Kampa* the Deceitful, deceitful because He remained latent till *Pārvatī* worshipping Him embraced Him out of fear of the flood which the Lord Himself engineered for bringing about this happy consummation. It will be seen in this *hymn*, that all these references are to the deity worshipped by the Mother Goddess—*Kāñci-p-purāṇam*. However, some writers differentiate among these and other names by explaining them as referring to various deities worshipped by *Viṣṇu*, *Brahma*, *Rudra* and *Pārvatī* respectively.

V

The *hymn* is important in showing the method of worship followed by Mother Goddess *Ātarittu* (2, 8), *Ētti* (3, 5, 6, 7, 9), *Keḻumi* (4), *Maruvi* (6), *Paravi* (9), "*Uḷḷattuḷki yukantumai Naṅkai vaḻipaṭacceṉṟu*" (10)—Coming near and taking refuge in Him and embracing Him in love, praising and worshipping Him, always contemplating on Him in joy or with an elevated feeling. The poet also refers to the *Pañcagavya*, for he addresses the Lord as "*Pālotu āṉaiñcum āṭṭukantāṉ*—the Lord who is fond of the *Pañcagavya* (8) inclusive of milk.

VI

The results following the worship also are hinted at: the Lord resides in the Hearts of His followers as their ally removing

all miseries and fetters; *"Cintippār avar cintai uḷāṉ"* (1)—'He who is in the mind of those who contemplate on Him'; *"Uṟṟavarkkutavum Perumāṉ"* (2)—"the Great One helping those taking refuge in Him"; *"Paṟṟiṉārkkeṉṟum paṟṟavaṉ"* (2)—'Ever the prop unto those who catch hold of Him or who is attached to Him'; *"Pāvippār maṉam pāvikkoṇṭāṉ"* (2)—'One who completely occupies the mind of those who contemplate on Him (probably as identical with themselves)'; *"Allal tīrttaruḷ ceyyavallāṉ"* (5)—'One who is capable of removing all our miseries and blessing us'; *"Naṉṉiṉārkkeṉṟum nallavaṉ"* (7)—'He who is good unto those who approach Him,' *"Cintitteṉṟum niṉainteḻuvārkaḷ cintaiyiṟ ṟikaḻum civaṉ"* (8)—'Śiva who shines in the mind of those who contemplate on Him and ever get up remembering Him', *"Pantitta viṉaip paṟṟaṟuppāṉ"* (8)—'One who cuts away the fettering *kārmic bond*'. In one way these descriptions may be taken as referring to the blessings the poet himself has received from the Lord. *'Emmāṉ'* (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9) or *'Eṅkaḷ pirāṉ'* (3, 5, 10)—'My father or the Lord, the Patron of ours' occurs in every verse. He refers to the Lord as *"Nāmukakkiṉṟa Pirāṉ"* (7)—'the Patron whom we are fond of' and *"Periya Emperumāṉ"* (11)—'Our Great Lord of high rank'.

VII

He refers to the worship of the Lord by the learned men and the *Vēdic* scholars—*"Periya Emperumāṉ eṉṟu eppōtum kaṟṟavar paravappaṭuvāṉ"* (11)—'Who is ever praised as the great Lord of high rank by the learned, the very form of the rare Lord Himself is considered as the most learned for He is spoken of as the expert in the *Vēdas* and their auxiliary studies. He is greatly fond of the *Sāmavēda* (6). It was He who has expounded the *Vēdas*.

Among His followers, as usual, our poet makes a distinction between *Amarar* (1) and *Viṇṇavar* (7), *Amarar* probably referring to those of His followers who had attained eternity. The Lord is possessed, in abundance, of that upright conduct so much praised and worshipped by the *Amarar*. In other places he speaks of the Lord as *'Umpar Kōṉ'* (2)— 'the King of those of the higher regions'. *'Dēvadēvaṉ'* (6)—'the *Dēva* of the *Dēvas*', *'Imaiyavar Kōṉ'* (10)—'the King of those who do not wink, probably the *Dēvas*'.

VIII

The joy of the special Grace of the Lord he had received by receiving partial eyesight, thanks to this feeling of guilt slowly fading away as a result of his confidence in the Lord's Grace and bliss, makes him feel that he has been saved so as to escape from the evil path. He feels that he has been safely transported to the sphere of upright path. He feels that those who are masters of these ten verses will feel the same experience of reaching His sphere of Good Path (11).

CHAPTER LXXII

TIRUVĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 83)

I

As soon as our poet got back his partial eyesight his mind naturally goes back to *Tiruvārūr* and he exclaims, "When am I to approach my Lord after stepping into *Tiruvārūr* ?" "*Eṉṟukol eytuvatē?*" — 'When am I to reach Him?' is the refrain of all these verses, these words forming the last half of every fourth line of every verse.

He speaks of certain obstacles to be removed at the methods of worshipping the Lord, at the same time describing the Lord in terms of *Purāṇic* stories and also expressing his own views about the precious nature of the Lord. *Tiruvārūr* comes back to his mind — *Tiruvārūr* of the South (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9), where the *zephyr* casts its fragrance (2), the city of rich fields full of excellent paddy (3), rich and cool fields beautified by rich soil and water (4), the city surrounded by strong fortress walls (9).

II

"At sunrise and sunset and at mid-day reciting the *Pañcākṣara* and mentally cogitating about Him, when am I to reach my father and patron before the ancient chronic *karma* coming uppermost enshrouds me?" (1). "When shall I reach Him with all my mind getting cool and collected, without any agitation, showering on Him crowded flowers both day and night and going round Him in circumambulation so that the well established *kārmic* cruelty may depart from me ?" (2). "Because of the ancient ignorance in the previous births, the mind thought of, later on, so many things. For removing these thoughts and illusion or confusion of mind, when am I to reach *Tiruvārūr*, to attain the sweetest nectar of my life ?" (3). "Good thoughts were destroyed during those days — thoughts of killing the rare lives and other faults cropped up. When am I to enter *Tiruvārūr*, stepping on to its frontiers, when am I, his slave, to reach Him for completely destroying all these thoughts and defects ?" (4). These thoughts probably refer to his thoughts of war as a political leader.

III

In the rest of the *hymn,* he refers to the descriptions of the Lord according to the *Purāṇas* and philosophies concluding at the end of every verse. "When am I to reach or attain Him ?" He expresses the great value he sets upon the Lord in his usual way calling Him, "*Oppamarāc cempoṉ*' (7), 'fine gold which has no equal'; '*Naṉmaṇi*' (7) 'the good gem'; he further speaks of Him, '*Eṉ poṉ, eṉ maṇi*', 'my gold and my gem' (7) and '*Emmiṟai*' (8) 'my Lord'. He exclaims, "When shall I see the Lord, so that my eye which has been always remembering Him hankering after or burning as it were for His sight may become cool and happy?" (9).

The Lord is the light all round the five elements and the sun. (6). He is the sevenfold tunes of those who are experts in the munificent *Tamiḻ* (6). He is the sound of the seven strings of the *yāḻ* (6). He is the treasure for every soul (7).

IV

He describes this *hymn* 'the ten verses of flowers' of many and high sounding words, uttered by *Ūraṉ,* the Lord of *Nāvalūr,* out of his longstanding good love for *Ārūr* where resides the Lord (10).

V

The Poet has referred to the *Purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord as the father of Him, who had cut the mango tree in the sea (5), as that light which besmears its body with the sacred ash (5) and adorns itself with the garment of the tiger skin (5), as One who receives the alms offered (5), as the beginning of everything (5, 9), as One who is beautified by the bull (8), as One sharing His form with that of the Mother Goddess (7), as One who crowns Himself with the dancing serpent up and above the crown beautified by the *Ganges* (8), as One who goes about begging in the skull as the great One beyond the reach of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (9) and as One who has the lightning-like ruddy mat-lock (10).

It is clear that the poet looks upon *Tiruvārūr* as a heaven on earth (10) and having experienced thus he assures the readers of this verse that those who had mastered the ten verses of this *hymn* will surely attain this bliss of the golden heaven (10).

VI

As already pointed out the poet has also experienced a golden holiness within himself driving away the sense of guilt from which he was suffering. This experience of feeling himself a '*Puṇṇiyaṉ*', inspires him to address his readers as *Puṇṇiyar* (10).

CHAPTER LXXIII

TIRU ĀMĀTTŪR

(*Hymn* 45)

I

The sufferings are not completely over, but the poet is very much overpowered by the Grace of God; for, as we have seen, he has received a prop of a walking stick and partial eyesight. In this *hymn* at *Tiruvāmāttūr,* the cloud of pessimism clears away and we hear in this *hymn* the poet almost dancing in joy of a new found bliss; he repeats every verb. The Grace is always identified with the Mother Goddess who is said to share the very form of the Lord. It is the Grace which leads us all to the Lord. This is spoken of as the Lord out of His love for His consort condescending to save us all, Her children. The very name of the Lord *Śiva* which is considered to be a *mantra* is explained in this way: '*Va*' represents the Grace of the Lord, and '*Śi*' the Absolute *Brahmam,* whom one attains through '*Va*' or Grace which is finally dissolved in the ultimate unity of the Absolute.

II

The poet sings: "I have seen Him; I have seen Him, who is acting according to the whims and fancies of the beautiful damsel or rather having the same ideas as that of the beautiful damsel. He had saved me. He had saved me by accepting me as His slave and servant. I have assumed the role, I have assumed the role of the servant of the Lord of *Āmāttūr*. This is not a falsehood what I am asserting; pray, listen to me. I have returned away from those who are not blessed with the wisdom of His *Vēdas*" (1).

"I sing, I sing of *Parvati,* catching hold of her feet. I go in quest of Him, I go in quest of Him, finally catching hold of Him. I dance, I dance to become one with Him. Devoid of all faults, devoid of all faults with all my consciousness or ideal, I shall embrace, I shall embrace our Lord of *Āmāttūr*" (2).

What faults were removed, we are next told in the third verse by referring to the two great victorious feats of the Lord, as though these feats were performed for our poet's sake, *viz.,* con-

quest of passion and death: "That day with the power of His eyes He burnt down, He burnt down *Kāma*. That day with His leg He rushed, He rushed on the Lord of Death. The Lord of *Āmāttūr* He has scrutinized carefully, He has scrutinized carefully (His servants). He shares He shares the form of the Mother Goddess" (3). The idea seems to be that the Lord was in search of a follower free from all defects. His Grace tempted Him to be merciful and to accept any soul, for, He could destroy their passions and their fate of Death.

Our poet in this very happy mood gives us the real relationship that existed between *Caṅkili* and himself, a relationship which he in a mood of care-worn pessimism began to condemn in his previous *hymn*: "I have realized, I have realized the shining truth standing inside my mind. I went, entered, and I reached, I reached *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* and I have attained, I have attained the soft shoulders and broad bosoms of *Caṅkili;* thereby I have enjoyed, I have enjoyed the Grace of the chief of *Āmāttūr*" (4).

Our poet turns to state to the Lord going in search of the loving souls in the *Bhikṣāṭana* form while even great men if they are egoistic, He destroys. He attributes all these to the Grace of the Lord, to the Mother rather than to the Lord Himself. "He conquered, He conquered in that sacrifice the denizens of the Heavens. He went about in the streets for paltry alms. He stood firm, He stood firm on the side of those full of *Dharma*. It is not He, It is not He. It is the Grace He showers. Ah! Our chief of *Āmāttūr !*" (5).

The same contract involved in saving the poet whilst refusing to reveal Himself to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* is further emphasized in the next verse: "He appeared, He appeared as a God impossible to be seen. He went higher up whilst *Nāraṇaṉ* and *Nāṉmukaṉ* went in quest of Him. He accepted, He accepted *Āmāttur* and myself. He has adorned, He has adorned His chest with the sacred thread rolling on it" (6). This probably refers to the Lord coming, in the Brahmin form or to the fact that the Lord who to frighten *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* stood like a pillar of fire, accepted our poet as His servant making Himself known as the Lord of the *Vēdas* through the symbol of the sacred thread. Our poet continues, "He is the thought, He is the thought of all the lives of the seven great worlds. To those who undertake to see Him, He is their eyes, He is their eyes. In His form, one half is a woman,

one half is a woman, The Lord of *Āmāttūr* is He who is nearest, He who is nearest" (7).

"He is the gold, He is the gold. He shines like the lightning, He shines like the lightning, He who does not leave me depart after having given me the gold. He is that great thing, He is that great thing, the esoteric significance of the *Vēdas.* He is mine, He is mine. Out of love in my mind, I shall enjoy the Lord of *Āmāttūr* and be full of bliss" (8).

"I go in quest of Him, I go in quest of Him. Every day, four finger-widths above the naval, I search for Him, I search for Him and His feet like red lotus. I will reach Him, I will reach Him. (*Māṭṭu* is the transitive form of the root '*māṭu*'. *Maṭṭu* is to bring two things together through a hook, *etc.*, to make two things to become attached to one another. The original form '*māṭu*' must therefore mean to come together). I will come together with Him or I will be in communion with Him. Catching hold of Him I shall dance, I shall dance happy in my heart" (9). The poet is in this way referring to the *yōgic* path where the *yogis* through kindling and controlling the nerve-centres reach the super-conscious spiritual stage where they are said to be embracing the Lord.

"Leaving all other relations, I reached inside my mind. The substance there, I caught hold of, I caught hold of. For reaching His lotus-like russet feet, I became devoid, I became devoid of other attachments, so that I may not be born again and again. I received the blessing, I received the blessing of becoming the servant of the servants of the Lord of *Āmāttur*" (10). Thus the poet hints at the truth that the culmination of *Śivabhakti* is the *Aṭiyār Bhakti.*

III

In this *hymn* the poet has given us the various stages of spiritual development which he himself had undergone. The poet is so overpowered by the experience whilst singing this *hymn* that he assures those who will, without any false pretensions and so moved as to be in tears, recite these words of *Ūraṉ, Vaṉroṇṭaṉ,* praising the Lord of the dark throat, our elder brother, and father, the Lord of *Āmāttur,* having all of us as His servants who are true, the blotless—will reach the golden feet of the Lord. The poet speaks here of '*Pulampuvār*', *i.e.,* they will feel penitent and cry — *i.e.,* those who find nothing else except the Lord as their

refuge (11). Though the *hymn* expresses the joy of the poet, it is in another sense the expression of his self-surrender to God.

IV

Our poet speaks of the Lord as *'Maiyaṉ'* after speaking of Him as the blotless and before referring to the blue throat. It may mean that He being the Absolute in which must exist everything, is also the blotful. He swallows away all the blots and miseries for saving others and purifying the world. Or, it may refer to the *Ardhanārīśvara* form where the Mother's form is beautified by collyrium or *'mai'*, the mother whom the poet refers to in the first three verses and the seventh verse directly and in the other verses indirectly as the blessing or Grace of the Lord saving us. Or, does it mean He is the centre? It is for consideration whether that meaning is as old as *Ārūrar.*

V

The *Purāṇic* references as already given are His company of the Mother (1, 2, 3, 7), His destruction of *Kāma* (3), and the Lord of Death (3), His destruction of *Dakṣa's* sacrifice (5), His begging in the streets (5) and His pillar of fire (6) appearing before *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (6), His sacred thread (6) and His blue throat (11). The poet refers to his own life, his company with *Caṅkili,* the Lord's gift of gold. He also refers to God being our father (11), our brother (7), our Lord (11), the Lord being the embodiment of truth to the truthful, the embodiment of *Dharma* (11), the eye unto those who want to see Him (7).

This *hymn* is important in bringing out the significance of Grace or Mother. It is one of the important *hymns* giving a *picture* of our poet's spiritual development.

CHAPTER LXXIV

TIRUNELVĀYIL ARATTURAI

(*Hymn* 3)

I

The city is called *Nelvāyil*, while the temple is referred to as *Aratturai*, as the ford of Hara or Śiva. Perhaps *Aratturai* is a mistake for *Aratturai*, for, if it was connected with *'Ara'* the Tamilian form of the Sanskrit *'Hara'*, one would expect *'Aran turai'*. The name *'Arutturai'* referring to a temple at *Tiruvenneinallūr*, will suggest *Aratturai* rather than *Aratturai*. But, it must be noted that all the manuscripts and editions give only the form *Aratturai*. This city is on the bank of *'Nivā'*, a form which occurs in Periya *Tirumoli*.[1] According to *Tamil* grammar this form will become *'Niva'*, *'Nivavu'* and our *Nampi Ārūrar* uses the form *'Nivavin karai'* which may be derived from both these latter forms. The inscriptions give the name of the river as *Nuka* (South Indian Inscriptions *Vol.* II, 15). This is the river now known as *Vellāru* running near *Parankippēttai* or Porto Novo.

II

Our poet calls the Lord, the blotless One, *'Ninmalan'* a word which is repeated in every second line of the first nine verses except in the 6th and in the first line of the tenth verse. After the last *hymn*, the poet seems to experience the Lord as the blotless and as one who removes the blot. He also calls Him *'Punitā'* (3), the Holy One. He is also the Beautiful One (*Alakā*—6); the Deathless (*Amarā*—6); the Supreme Light (*Parañjōti*—8): all these suggesting the conception of *Sat, Chit* and *Ānanda*. In this *hymn* the poet begs of the Lord to tell him a strategic way of escape, so as to reach the feet of the Lord: "*Uyyappōvatōr cūlal collē*". This "*Uyyappōvatōr cūlal collē*"—'Tell me a strategy of escape' is the ending of all the verses except verse No. 2, where the ending is "*Unnatiyē pukum cūlal collē*"—'Tell me a strategy of entering your feet'. Instead of

1. 3: 2: 9.

interpreting the word *'cūḻal'* as "strategy', one can interpret it as a surrounding or a place where the poet can go and reach the Lord's feet as a safe place, where he can escape from the miseries of the world.

III

In this *hymn,* the poet after the dance of internal joy, has courage enough to face the world; and the beauty of the *Purāṇic* form of the Lord appears before him. In contrast to these, appear the miseries of the world, the slowly working Death, the temptations of the senses, the helpless state of his own partial blindness, the fear of the sea of births, the ephemeral nature of youth and this body—a body which is so flimsy and the temptation of women, and our poet cries to the Lord to show him a way out. The descriptions of the transitoriness of the world, youth and body, and the description of the Lord are reminiscent of ancient authors, *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* (From whose work a number of passages has been adopted), *Campantar,* and the authors of *Nālaṭiyār, etc.* Perhaps the poet also is referring to some proverbs prevalent in his age. That seems to be implied in our poet's statement *'Collāykkaḻi-kiṉṟatu'* (1).

The river *Nivā* rushes, pushing down the *akil,* the precious shining gems all mixed together, from the mountains (1), along with pepper creepers and big trees (2), with the flowers of the *'vēṅkai'* tree and the *'kōṅku'* tree of high branches (4). The river rushes down with tall bamboos, when the moving clouds rain on the topmost peak of the mountain (5). The river rushes down with beautiful gold, cardamom and clove (6). It comes pushing down with great force, heaps of *akil* from the face as it were of the peak (7). On the bank of this river stands the city, where dances the Lord in the presence of the damsels of curled tresses of hair (2). That holy place is the rendezvous of the damsels, glorious like the peacock, who have no compeers (7). The place is full of gardens with trees growing very high. In the tanks of blue water lilies the swans swarm (6). In the sylvan tract of the place surrounded by long fields full of water, the crabs play (8)—it is one of the characteristic features of the poet to note not only the significant swan, but also the insignificant crabs. The Lord, our poet says, lives here for long in this beauty spot.

IV

The *Purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord refer to His crown of the crescent moon (1), His dance before the loving damsels (2), His ear-ring of *makara* (7), His girdle of a dancing serpent (3), the white bull (3), His love for being seated under the shade of a banyan tree (6), the vanquishment of *Rāvaṇa* (8), His becoming invisble to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (9) and His *Ardhanārīśvara form* (3). In this *hymn* also, our poet seems to be differentiating between *Amarar* and *Vāṉavar*—"*Amarark kamarar Perumāṉ*" (8) and '*Nāṉil muṭi vāṉavar vantiṟaiñcum........Niṉmalaṉ*' (9).

V

The rest of the *hymn* is his lamentations to the Lord with reference to the ephemeral nature of the world and his prayer to the Lord to inform him of a way out. "They have constructed a beautiful place to live in (perhaps a palace), they walked in, they dressed, they became grey and they died — thus in this world, life is passing away and this transitoriness has become a proverb. I, Your slave, realizing this, have clung to you. Tell me how I can escape from the crux." (1). "In this earthly world ephemeral and vain, you have made me a man but I cannot stand firm. Or, I may not be eternal. Tell me a place where I can enter your feet, successfully fighting against and extinguishing (these five sensations) of the five gates of sense organs" (2). "What alas! I have no eye except yourself. (This is on the basis of *Periyāḻvār*: "*Viḻikkum kaṇṇilēṉ niṉkaṇ maṟṟallāl*"[2] It is also possible to interpret, "One eye, I have not". For, that is the story about his present partial blindness. "I have no other attachment except yourself, O, my Lord! Please tell me of a place of escape which I may reach crossing such a full ocean of birth" (*Aṟṟār* must be split into '*aṟṟu*' meaning such, and '*ār*' meaning 'full' — 3). (The terror of this sea is so well known and therefore it is referred to as 'that' or such — 3).

"The youth is like the bank on which dashes the floods. This birth is like waking up from sleep. Without making me suffer residing in this body and withering away, tell me your servant, a place to which I could escape" (4). "The five senses will get confused and the heart will get troubled when the followers of the Lord

2. 5: 1: 2.

of Death, who fight with their spears, attack. Before I become unconscious as a result of these, tell me a place to which I can escape" (5). "I am not happy with this body which suffers even when a tiny awn of paddy presses on it. I have suffered (enough). Tell me a place to which I, your slave, can now escape" (6). "This is a life where the decorations of a marriage become decorations of a corpse, O, Lord! tell me a place to which I could escape" (7). "Because of my good fortune which I had amassed in olden times, I was blessed with the gift of reciting your name; tell me a place to which, I, your slave, can now escape" (8). "Before I become like the bees swarming the jack fruit, to be caught in the trap of the damsels of shining forehead, tell me a place to which, I Your slave, can now escape" (9). (The reading given is *"Vāṇār nutalār valaippaṭ ṭaṭiyēṉ palaviṉ kaṉi īyatu pōlvataṉmuṉ"* — Samajam edn. of 1935). But Ramananda Yōgi's annotation gives the reading *"Īpōlvatu"*. But this will make the line shorter than it ought to be. All the other editions give the reading *"Īntatu pōl"*. The reading *"Īyatu pōlvatu"* was suggested perhaps by the lines in *Tiruvacakam, "Uḻaitaru nōkkiyar koṅkaip palāppaḻattīyiṉ oppāy"* (*Nīttal Viṇṇappam*: 46). One wonders whether the word *'īntu'* itself meant a bee. *'Īyal, īcal, īka'* are words with the same root *'Ī'*; with *'tu'* as a formative, and by nunnation the form *'Īntu'* may be had. *'Antu'* is a small grey winged insect found in stored paddy and the people of Chingleput Disitrict speak also of *'Antu'* as an insect affecting the paddy. Therefore, *'Īntu'* may mean such a small insect.

Our poet speaks of the Lord as standing firm like *'A'* (அ) standing first among the letters (7). This reminds us the first *kuṟaḷ* and the *Gīta* statement, "I am the letter *'A'* among the letters" — *"Akṣarāṇām akārō asmi"* (*Gītā*: 10 : 33).

VI

The poet feels elated after singing this *hymn* and as a result of this elation he feels in singing this *hymn*, he assures that those who mastered these ten verses of this garland of a *hymn* of good *Tamiḻ* sung by *Ārūrar,* the servant and follower of the Lord, the chief of Southern *Nāvalūr,* full of beautiful palaces and long royal roads, where rush the chariots — that these experts will become kings or emperors riding on elephants, black elephants full of must on which will hum the bees and will rule the whole of Heavens (10). This shows the poet's mind still bears traces of his political associations.

CHAPTER LXXV

TIRUVĀVAṬUTUṞAI

(*Hymn* 70)

I

Our poet according to *Cēkkiḻār* sang *Hymn* No. 66 on *Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai* whilst he was going north from *Tiruvārūr*. In that *hymn* he mentioned a few stories of *Śiva* which attracted his attention and inspired him to take refuge in the Lord. In the present *hymn*, every line ends with the refrain: "*Eṉai añcal eṉṟu aruḷāy, Yār eṉakku uṟavu Amararkaḷ ēṟē*"—"Shower your blessings by assuring me with the words, 'Fear not'. Who is there related to me (if not you) oh, lion amongst the *Amaras* or the Deathless?"

Because of this difference in the emotional tune of these *hymns, Cēkkiḻār* concluded that the *Hymn* No. 66 was sung when our poet went northward and this *Hymn* No. 70 when he returned southward. The idea of taking refuge inspired by the stories is going to occur, even according to *Cēkkiḻār* in a few *hymns* later on, as for instance in the famous *hymn* on *Tiruppuṉkūr* — *H.* 55. The prayer for the Lord's assuring words 'Fear not' occurred in the *hymn* No. 27 sung according to *Cēkkiḻār* at the period of the *hymn* No. 66. It is, therefore, possible to argue that instead of differentiating between these two *hymns* on *Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai,* both may belong to the same period of our poet's mental, physical and political suffering, a period perhaps when there was a political confusion in our poet's life, a confusion still further aggravated by the incident of *Caṅkili,* all of which brought on, a sense of guilt, blindness and other physical ailments, only to be cured when his feeling of repentance glowed with his faith in and the joy of the Lord's Grace — all belonging to the period of his pilgrimage to the North and his return.

II

The present *hymn* contains verses ending with the words "*Eṉai añcal eṉṟaruḷāy yār eṉakku uṟavu amararkaḷ ēṟē*". Thus the feeling of world's oppression still continues in this *hymn* also, though he is sure of the Lord's Grace and his absolute dependence on Him. This brings out the truth that the Lord is the real relation of ours — all kinds of relationship. The third line ends in the

phrase *'Tiruvāvaṭutuṟaiyuḷ'* and is connected with the first word of the fourth line, making thus a complete description of the Lord, *'Tiruvāvaṭutuṟaiyuḷ Aṅkaṇā etc.'* emphasizing His peculiar relationships: *'Aṅkaṇā'* (1) — 'Oh! Lord of the beautiful eyes or the Lord of mercy in *Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai'*; *'Aṇṇalē'* (2)—'O, Great Personality'; *'Appaṉē'* (3) —'O, Father'; *'Atipaṉē'* (4) —'O! Our Lord'; *'Antaṇā'* (5)—'O, Seer!' (*i.e.*, Brahmin, *Guru* of beautiful and cool qualities); *'Aṟavaṉē* (6) — 'O, Lord of *Dharma!*' or, 'O, Saint'; *'Aiyaṉē'* (7)—'O, Brother or Chief!'; *Ātiyē'* (8)—'O, Beginning of everything!'; *'Āṉaiyē'* (9)—'O, Elephant' (usually an endearing term used in addressing a child); *'Antavāṇaṉ'* (10) — 'The resident of this Universe — its inner principle'.

It was noted that the poet getting himself freed of his depressions and sufferings, feels purer and this inspires him to address the Lord as the Purest. In this *hymn* also our poet addresses the Lord as *'Puṉitā'* (1) — 'the Purest'; *'Puṇṇiyā'* (1) — 'the Virtuous'; *'Tīrttaṉē'* (1)—'the Lord of the Holy Path'; *Tēvaṉē* (2)— 'the Bright One'; *'Uttamā'* (3)—'the Best'; *'Vikirtā'* (4)—'One who stands apart as unique (or, as we interpreted as the art form as differentiated from the Natural form)'. His emphasis on Truth also was noted. Here also, he addresses the Lord as *'Meyyaṉ'* (7)—'the Truthful one' or 'the Lord of Truth'. The endearing terms of love and worth expressing our Poet's love, respect and bliss in relation to the Lord as the Supreme value bring out the feeling of holiness which he used to express by calling God the gem (4), the gold (6), the beautiful (8), the nectar (8), and the Light (7). The Lord is not merely honey but the clear honey (1). He is not merely the gold but the pure red gold of *Tiruvārūr* (6). He is not merely light but the shining (never dimming) light (7). He is not merely the gem but faultless glorious gem — *'Mācilā-maṇiyē'* (9). Other descriptions are continued in the same strain. He is *'Kuṟaivilā niṟaivu'*—'The Absolute Perfection without any defect or deficiency' (6), *'Kōtilā Amutu'* — (8) — 'the nectar without any dregs' (descriptions which are again reminiscent of *Tiruvācakam* (*Kōyiṟṟiruppatikam*-5). *'Guṇakkuṉṟē'* (6)—'The mountain of good qualities' (This is reminiscent of *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* and *Tiruvācakam*); *'Tītilā malai'* (8)—'the mountain without any evil'.

III

The Grace of the Lord is emphasized as in the previous *hymn*. "On this earth, I lay confused. He of his own accord forcibly ac-

cepted me as His servant and saved me. I have no eye. Because of the disease inflicting me in this body, I have become a burden to you. Be pleased to say 'Fear not' " (2). "I have no wisdom. I have been confused because of the disease oppressing me in this body" (4). "I, your slave, have no relations except you. Will it be beneath your dignity to forgive one fault of mine?" (6). The Grace demands worship. The worship with honey, milk, curd—a bath in these the Lord loves—is referred. He is worshipped by all (9).

(*Amarar* as distinguished from *Vāṉavar or Viṇṇavar* may mean the freed souls. In this very *hymn* our poet addresses the Lord as, *'Imaiyōr toḻutēttum vikirtaṉē'* (4)—'The form assumed by Him for being worshipped according to the rules and rites and for being praised by the *Dēvas* with all their eyes never even winking'; *'Imaiyōr cīr Īcaṉē'* (5)—'The Lord of the *Dēvas*'; *'Imaiyōr toḻu kōvē'* (8) —'The king who is worshipped by the *Dēvas*'. This conception of the Lord's sovereignty over the *Dēvas* and this Universe is thus emphasized often and as usual, because the poet feels that there is nothing else except God. In this connection, the term *'Pacupatī'* (8)—'The Lord of the souls', *'Bhutanātaṉ'* (1)—'The Lord of the souls' and *'Aṇṭavāṇaṉ'* (10) —'The life of the Universe', and *'Vāṉanātaṉ'* (9) —'The Lord of the country of Heavens' become significant).

IV

The *Purāṇic* descriptions also seem to suggest the Grace of the Lord.

The Mother Goddess had been explained as the very form of Grace of the Lord and her company is referred to in this *hymn* (3, 8). He is under the shadow of the Banyan tree to deliver His message and bestow His Grace thus constituting our greatest wealth (3). The *Ganges* (1) and the crescent moon on the mat-lock (2), the gift bestowed on *Vijaya* or *Arjuna* (5), the mercy shown to the egoistic *Rāvaṇa* (5) and the gift of the discus to *Viṣṇu* (7) and the swallowing of the poison (1) are all mentioned as emphasizing this Grace of the Lord. Even the destructions are but aspects of divine Grace. The three castles were destroyed but their Lords were really blessed then (3). Hence our poet calls the Lord the warrior of divine Grace—*"Tiruvaruḷ cēr Cēvakā"* (8). He is of red form (7) and red eyes (7) —red eyes are usually referred to in the description of *Viṣṇu* as *'Cēvakā'* or Warrior. The

Bull represents *Praṇava* or *Dharma* and its Lord is the Lord of all — *'Pacupati'* (8); *'Paramēṭṭi'* (8) — the Great beyond the Great — The Supreme Being (one of the few terms our poet is fond of repeating; *Jains* also use this word). The frightful dance with the angry *'Kāḷi'* (4), the force of complete destruction and the bloody revolution is only to revolutionize her; to remove her anger; to convert bloody revolution into a revolution of love (4). So have to be interpreted, though the poet does not say so, the flaying of the elephant's skin (7), the tiger's skin (7), the destruction of the boar, the tortoise and others (9) and the conquest of the serpent (10) : the skins, the shell and the bones are lovingly worn by the Lord as ornaments. He loves equally the great and the small, the *koṉrai and mattam* (10), the serpent and the moon (10), all making a harmonious round laurel of a crown on His ruddy mat-lock (10). Thus this suggests the beauty aspect of the Lord; this is made clear by other references: *"Teṇṇilā eṟikkum caṭaiyaṉē"* (5), *"Intu cēkaraṉē"* (5).

V

The beauty and Grace of the Lord suggest and remind the beauty of *Tiruvārūr* — surrounded by the gardens full of bees with wings, a remembrance which it was stated inspired him to leave *Tiuvoṟṟiyūr* and *Caṅkili* for *Tiruvārūr*.

VI

Our poet feels he has been purified. The fear of death disappears at the thought of the Lord who is Death unto the Lord of Death (1). Passions no more inflict him, after his realization that the Lord is the fire unto *Kāma* (1). He is happy at the thought of the Lord of Grace showering blessings on worshippers witnessing the dance, where dance the ear-rings along with the ears (6). Our poet feels the Lord has cured him of his diseases; that the Lord is the medicine and the nectar all along his way: *"Vaḻittuṇai maruntu"* (9). He is proud that he is the father of the saintly *Ciṅkaṭi* (10); has become the nearest of the nearest servants of the Lord (10); the most obstinate follower (*Vaṉṟoṇṭaṉ* — 10) who would never leave Him. He feels elated at singing this *hymn* on the Lord of the Universe out of great love — this *hymn* of ten cool *Tamiḻ* flowers (10). This experience of his, whilst singing this *hymn,* makes him assure those who are masters of this *hymn* that they will also, like him, cut away the fetters of birth and death (10). Has not the first verse begun praising the Lord as *'Kālakāla'* ?

CHAPTER LXXVI

TIRUTTURUTTIYUM TIRUVĒḶVIKKUṬIYUM

(*Hymn* 74)

I

This *hymn* is on two temples, at *Tirutturutti* and *Tiruvēḷvikkuṭi* (*Turutti* is an island in a river). (*Tirutturutti* as distinguished from *Pūnturutti* is *Kuttālam* in the Tanjore District). The *hymn of Ñāna Campantar* explains this combination of these two temples :

> *"Pāṅkiṉāl umaiyoṭum pakaliṭam pukaliṭam paimpoḻilcūḻ*
> *Vīṅkunīrt turuttiyār; iravitat tuṟaivarvēḷ vikkuṭiyē."*[1]

"The Lord enters *Turutti* as His resort for the day time along with the Mother, the *Turutti* of heaving up waters surrounded by the green groves; He resides during night in *Vēḷvikkuṭi*". This combination is also referred to in the first verse of the *hymn* No. 18 of *Nampi Ārūrar* :

> *"Mūppatu millai piṟappatu millai iṟappatillai-c*
> *Cērppatu kāṭṭakat tūriṉu mākaccin tikkiṉallāl*
> *Kāppatu veḷvik kuṭitaṉ ṭuruttiyeṅ kōṉaraimēl*
> *Ārppatu nākama ṟintōmēl nāmivark kāṭpaṭōmē."*[2]

The *Vēḷvikkuṭi* Grant of *Neṭuñcaṭaiyaṉ*[3] throws some light on this : The place was granted by the great king *Palyākacālai Mutukuṭumip Peruvaḻuti* to one Brahmin *Naṟkoṟṟaṉ* for performing a *Vēdic* sacrifice and was named as such after the sacrifice was performed by the said Brahmin. It was usurped by the *Kalabhras* and continued to remain under the usurpation even after the resumption of authority of the *Pāṇḍyas.* When *Neṭuñcaṭaiyaṉ* came to the throne it was restored in the 8th century to the claimant on appeal, the claimant belonging to the line of *Naṟkoṟṟaṉ.* Our poet belongs to the 7th Century and during that period *Vēḷvikkuṭi* must have continued to be under usurpation.

1. 3:90:1.
2. 7:18:1.
3. *Ep. Ind., Vol.* XVII, *Part* I, *pp.* 298ff.

One wonders whether because of this, *Vēḷvekkuṭi* lost its importance and worship as a separate temple, so much so, people had to worship it only at *Tirutturutti* believing that the Lord who was present there at *Vēḷvekkuṭi* remained at *Tirutturutti* during day-time.

II

In this *hymn,* the poet is so very much taken up by the greatness and Grace of God that he feels he cannot forget or adequately enjoy, know, sing or praise Him nor could he get away from His path or decry Him. That is what he expresses forcibly in the first two feet of every fourth line. He condemns himself as the cruel one and the dog, in the last two feet of every third line. The words, *"Turuttiyār Vēḷvikkuṭiyuḷār aṭikaḷai"* as referring to the Lord of these two temples precede this condemnation and occur as the third, fourth, fifth and sixth feet in every third line. The first two lines usually give us the description of *Kāviri* in its floods in which *Turutti* is an island. *"Emperumāṉai"* is another phrase repeated as the third and fourth feet in every fourth line, a phrase put in apposition with *"Turuttiyār Vēḷvikkuṭi uḷār aṭikaḷ".* The last halves of the fourth lines are put in apposition with this same *"Emperumāṉai"* and describe the Lord as having removed the fetters and sufferings of the Poet. In this arrangement the verses end in the accusative case which usually never occupies the last place in a sentence in *Tamiḻ.* This rhetorical inversion lays the emphasis on the special Grace shown to the poet and suggests the rhythm called *'akappāṭṭu vaṇṇam'* (*Tol.* 1480) where the verse, though complete in sense, suggests apparently an incomplete sentence.

III

"How am I to forget my Lord who has destroyed the misery caused by the disease inflicting my body ?" (1). "I do not know how to sing the praise of my Lord who had completely severed the attachment of all the old *karmas* that exist" (2). "I do not know how to praise my Lord who has cut away the disease which afflicted me" (3). "I do not know how to know my Lord who had cut away the defect or the welded link of the *karmas* which exist and which are impossible to be borne" (4). "I have not left off babbling (the names of) my Lord who had today itself removed completely the diseases with which I was afflicted" (5). "I do not know to despise my Lord who is capable of removing here and

now, in this birth the vilest of diseases" (6). "I do not know how to express or praise my Lord who had completely removed the old *karmas* so well known to the world" (7). "I do not know how to enjoy or embrace my Lord who had cut away here and now in this birth the defect or welding link of the sufferings coming from previous births" (8). "I do not know how to stand aside or escape from my Lord who has here and now freed me from the diseases of the past" (10).

IV

The *hymn* represents our poet's complete self-surrender and the last verse emphasizes this truth. He describes himself as *Ārūraṉ,* the servant, the slave of the slaves of the Lord, one who does not know anything except the victorious feet of the Lord of the beautiful hands. Our poet has gone through this part of *Tapas* enduring all sufferings in the name of the Lord and getting relieved of the sufferings to reach higher sphere of the eternal. He, therefore, assures those who will carry this song of the Lord on their tongue with joy, worshipping the Lord with their hands will similarly rule the world of the eternal, reaching it through the path of *tapas.* Suffering thus becomes *tapas* — a new way of looking at the world.

V

There are not many *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord in this *hymn,* except in the last verse which refers to the Lord sharing His form with the Mother, the Lord riding on the bull and His destroying the three cities.

VI

The *hymn* is full of the description of the *Kāviri,* so full of beauty and divinity. It is placed on a par with the holy Ganges (10) and the Lord is praised equally as the Lord of the *Ganges* and Lord of *Turutti* inside *Kāviri* (10). The river makes the land rich, beautiful and holy. The cult of the holy rivers inspiring the people to bathe in these holy waters is seen reflected in this *hymn.*

"The great clouds send their lightning flashes. They rain in torrents. The stream rushes down with terrible cracking noise, bringing the waves to dash against the banks. There flows the *Kāviri* which is metamorphosed into our food. On its wide banks reside the *bhaktas* who wake up worshipping His two feet as his lovers. The Lord knows what they say. ('*Coṉṉavāṟaṟivār*'

reminds us of the name of *Kaḷaṟiṟṟaṟivār* who is referred to as '*Coṉṉavāṟaṟivār*' in an inscription of *Nīṭūr*) (1).

"Those things which are there for coming together, come embracing others and get threaded up so to say. Thus the millet and mountain paddy are harvested and scattered by the water of the floods. The flood attacks the big '*kōṅku*' and '*marutam*' trees on the sides; it pushes the bunches of fruits so much, that they, like a mountain, obstruct the flow of water. But it still pushes even this mountain along, rushing fast. This is the *Kāviri* wherein is the island of *Turutti* whose Lord is our God." (2).

"The tusks of the murderous huge elephants, the rich yield of fresh and swelling fruits — these the flood carries mixing and bringing together things from far off places. It reaches, it embraces, it flows down and it enters. The big river *Kāviri* goes on its march enabling the *yōgins* and *bhōgins* who both of them perform *tapas* in their own way to bathe at dawn [The conception of *yōgins* (people who perform *yōga* as ascetics) and *bhōgins* are people who enjoy probably as referring to house-holders — as performing *tapas* is significant; for, is not our poet himself a *bhōgi* performing *tapas* ? This also reminds us of *Tiruttakka Tēvar* — "*Naṟṟavam ceyvārkkiṭam tavam ceyvārkku mahtiṭam*" — *Nāmakaḷ*: 48]" (3).

"The streams shower down rough surfaced big logs of sandal wood and of *akil*. They rush down and carry away pepper and plantains to be secreted away by the waste land (*Puṉpulam*); thus pushing everything goes to the sea this great river *Kāviri*. With the idea of production it flows on its sides and throws out its water and its gifts" (4).

"Pushing along the tusks of the elephants which rain down their three musts and the good golden flowers of '*vēṅkai*' tree, the mountain streams rush down and down and their fast rushing waters come together and here they whirl and flow down enabling the people of the eight points of the compass to come together and bathe" (5).

"The *Kāviri* carries the big and famous sandal logs and *akil*, gold and gems. It pushes along beautiful flowers. It swells up on the great banks of such rare workmanship which it digs down only for increasing the fertility and wealth. The glistening great *Kāviri* removes the sin of those who bathe in it and washes away the

dark collyrium (some take it as referring to the *avidya, āṇava* or ignorance; some take it as the dirt of the body)" (6).

"Crossing as it were the plantain fruits and the mango fruits on the mountain and then slowly making them fall, fighting against the '*marā*' trees, it rushes with the sole idea of seeing the great blue sea crying for it; it carries the peacock feathers as though balanced on its shoulders, throwing out pearls on all sides: thus rushes the great *Kāviri*" (7).

"The great *Kāviri* becomes crystal clear, throwing out shining crystals and carrying the *chaurie* of the yak. It goes with the sole intention of seeing the great blue and pungent sea whilst the cities and countries think of it, joyfully, with all their hearts whilst many birds dip into it and frisk about on its bright bank" (8).

"It makes rich the fields. It swells with no possibility of even flow. It carries gold. It creates commotion and this resounds everywhere. It topples down and scatters big sized shining pearls and groups of shining gems. It makes the great trees on the two banks split, carries them and dashes them against — thus goes the big *Kāviri* stirred up and agitated" (9).

TIRU ĀRŪR-P PARAVAIYUṆMAṆṬAḶI

(*Hymn* 96)

I

The poet reaches *Tiruvārūr*. He enters the temple within the fortress wall. On the one side, he feels the Lord's superiority and his inferiority; on the other side, he feels the sufferings and he laments for them expressing however his own firm faith in the Lord. Every verse ends in this *hymn* with the own words, *'Paravai uṉ maṇṭaḷi Ammāṉē'* — "O, Lord of the Temple in the Fortress wall". The famous Fortress wall with its shrubs of *'karantai'* and *'mattam'* and trees of *'vaṉṉi'* and *'kūviḷam'* reminds the poet of the Lord, who is the Lord of these flowers as much as the Lord of this Temple of the Fortress (10). The conception of Holiness has taken root in him. He begins by addressing the Lord as the Lord of holy tongue (or mouth) and this is appropriate to the occasion for he prays to the Lord that He may exclaim in pity, 'Alas!'; our poet sings, "Will you not protect those who perform your services, from the sufferings inflicting them ? The five (sensations) have noted this and if even they prevent one, I will praise you with my tongue expressing good ideas in good words. Pray, out of pity for me cry 'Alas !' O, my father of the earthen temple in the Fortress Wall!" (1). The same idea he repeats in the fourth verse, "I always contemplate on you. The five (sensations) prevent me from contemplating on good things (This is according to the reading, *'Nallaṉa nōkkāmaik kākkiṉṟāṉ'*. There is another reading *'kākkiṉṟāy'* — You prevent me from seeing other good things of the world). The five have noticed this. Even if they prevent me and keep a watch over me, I find you in my mind with the garland of words of speech, O, my father of *Paravaiyuḷ maṇṭaḷi!*" (4).

II

He tries to reach the universal stage forgetting his individual sufferings but feeling them as the sufferings of all the followers of the Lord. He begs of the Lord to hearten them with the assuring words, "Fear not". "With their mind beautified by you, getting

elevated and hastening, they contemplate and think only of you. Tell them, "Fear Not"" (5). The Lord is here referred to as being in the company of the mother and with the blue throat, all symbolic of this love and Grace to which alone the poet is addressing.

"Without even changing from their wonted path, these followers ever speak well of you. What is their fate ? You are the Lord of virtue (*Puṇṇiyā*), the very embodiment of virtue (*Puṇṇiya-māṇāṉē*). (It looks as though it were a rebuke. For, the Lord in the view of the poet is not evidently virtuous in His dealing with these followers). "What is it that is good for you, you who dance in joy in the graveyard of corpses which the ghosts do not leave ?" (3). The poet seems to suggest that these followers are not worse than the ghosts. (We had elsewhere pointed out the pure mind of the followers is the real graveyard where dances the Lord).

Our poet, a scholar himself, thinks of the followers of the Lord, who are scholars and poets and describes God as their Lord. Their greatness makes him feel that the Lord is a special boon to them all. "You are the gold unto the scholars. Your fame can be praised by these poets, though, you are the self-luminous light yourself, praising your form by yourself. You are the lightning — a flash in the darkness of isolation when first experienced. You are like the young rising sun in the dawning sky of rose (*i.e.,* the gradually developing light of love after the night of suffering and darkness)." (There is no prayer in this verse. When the Lord has showered blessing where is the necessity for any prayer ?) (2).

"My father, the Great Lord, showering your Grace on those following the path of *Āgamic* rites and great for such great conduct, the Lord and father of the chief of *Piṭavūr,* the chief of great love and mercy (Probably a well known chief of *Ārūrar's* age. Others take it as referring to the Lord Himself), the only father and Lord of those who live happily by their knowledge or erudition of the cool *Tamiḻ* works!" (6). Here also there is no prayer. This makes our poet think of the Lord as something supreme above everything and everyone. "You are Heavens. You are the Highest thought, up above the Higher spheres up above the High regions. All the letters, words and subject matter — are but your eyes (*i.e.,* three eyes — or, it means you have created all these). [Having addressed everything as His eye, he prays to the Lord,

"O the Lord of (or the form of) the Universe! Show me those to be seen through your eye (by blessing me with an eye which I had lost and which when received will be holy as being your gift)]" (7).

This universal vision inspires the poet to praise the Lord and His Grace : "You are the wind, you are our speech (*kūṟṟu* is taken by others as the Death unto Death), shining with the throat blue like the clouds. You are of the (pure and sacred) ash, with the damsel of the beautiful bangles sharing your form. You are the Lord of the river full to its brim, remaining there upon your long mat-lock" (8) — these suggest His miraculous Grace and mysterious powers. Our poet forgets even to pray for anything because he stands enchanted by the thought and form of His Grace.

III

Thus contemplating on the Lord's greatness and Grace, our poet becomes conscious of himself as contrasted with the Lord. Naturally a feeling of self-condemnation arises. The poet condemns himself — "I am a sinner; I am the condemned, doing no good act amidst all my activities. I am the cruel one hankering after everything I see. I am your slave, but I am one who does not describe your services as I ought to (*kūṟumāṟu* or describe your services so as to embrace you, for, *kūṭumāṟu* is another reading)" (9).

But this condemnation is a passing phase; it has made the poet pure, holy and whole. He feels that he is full of divine knowledge and divine love. He describes himself '*Nirampiya Ūraṉ*'—'*Ūraṉ* who is full of perfection'. He sang of God that He is the highest conception, high above those of high spheres, higher than those of the still further higher spheres. The experience of perfection which came over him whilst singing this *hymn* in a communion with highest conception of Godhead, inspires him to assert that those who love this *hymn* of ten uttered by him with the experience above described, are like God, those who are the highest, higher than the people of a high spiritual sphere who are themselves higher above the people of the high spiritual sphere (10).

IV

In this *hymn*, the poet has referred to the *purāṇic* descriptions of the Mother (5), His ruddy form (2), His dance in the graveyard

in the company of the ghosts (3), His sapphire and cloud like throat (5), His three eyes (7), His mat-lock with the river (8) and His favourite flowers of *karantai, vaṉṉi, mattam* and *kūviḷam* (10) — descriptions which become one with the contexts. The idea that His three eyes are the letters, words and subject matter is significant (7) to the *Tamils,* as explained elsewhere especially in this *hymn* which speaks of the Lord as the father and Lord of the *Tamiḻ* scholars. He refers to the worship with the garland of speech (4), a worship which is probably the special greatness of poets and scholars. The *Āgamic* path and conduct are also mentioned. The path of contemplation on God as the highest possible conception is also hinted at.

TIRU ĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 37)

I

This *hymn* is addressed to the bees, birds and the cloud as messengers of love. Every verse ends in a chorus like ending: "*Uṇartta vallīrkaḷē*". It is either an interrogation, "Are you capable of making Him realize this state of mine?" or better an assertion, "You are indeed capable of making Him realize this state of mine." This will imply a request that they should take pity on the love-sick maiden and carry her message for informing Him and impressing on Him her true desperate condition. Thus these verses are the speeches of a love-sick maiden, pining away, unable to bear His separation.

II

"Coming together of the loving couple" is technically known as '*Kuṟiñci*'. It occurs under ideal conditions in the mountain tract and at midnight. Without any conscious or previous arrangement, Providence brings them together. The two become one great embodiment of divine or natural love. "Separation" is known as '*Pālai*' and the ideal place and time are the desolate desert and the summer midday respectively. "Living together a chaste domestic life of complete identity of purpose" is called '*Mullai*'. The ideal place is the sylvan tract and the ideal time is the dusk (first part of the night) of the rainy season. "The sulky mood" is known as '*Marutam*' and its ideal place is the city and the ideal time, the dawn. "When the hero is absent for a long time, the heroine is overpowered by a feeling of despair and desolation" and this is technically known as '*Neytal*' and the ideal place is the lonely mourning sea and the ideal time is the desolate and exhausting afternoon. It is this *neytal* which is described in this *hymn*. The crane (*nārai*-8), the stork (*kuruku*-1), the swan (*aṉṉam*-10) and the ruddy goose (*cakravāḷa*-4) are all water birds. To distinguish this sea-board from the desert, there will be a grove on the beach, known in *Tamiḻ* as '*Kāṉal*', wherein will gather all kinds of birds, the parrots, the *koel*, the bees (10).

The clouds also come in as possible mesengers (7), because they travel through air as much as birds. The feeling of despair and desolation is so powerful that the lovesick maiden has no time to think whether the birds can be the messengers of love. One gets great relief by the very act of giving expression to the pent up feelings. We have already referred to the philosophy of the common folk who look upon the birds speaking and hearing perhaps better than men.

III

The commentator on *Tiruvāymoḻi* (the commentary known familiarly as '*Īṭu*'), refers to a tradition about one of the readers condemning this kind of poem as rank eroticism. *Yājñavalkya,* explaining the greatest truth about the '*Ātman*' to *Maitrēyī* in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad*[1] speaks of the '*Ātman*' as that which is to be heard, that which is to be contemplated on, that which is to be seen and this commentator says that this describes the love, one has to bear to the *Ātman* or the Lord; this love is the *Bhagavatkāma*. *Nammāḻvar* asserts that he will not forget Him, that he will cry for Him, embrace Him and love by worshipping Him[2] and *Naññiyar* explains this as the *Āḻvar's* experience of the Lord enjoying Him with his mind, speech and body. This *hymn* of *Nampi Ārūrar* also is one such experience of love as is made clear by the statement in the last verse of this *hymn* :

> "*Nittamā kanniṉain tuḷḷamēt tittoḻum*
> *Attaṉam poṟkaḷa laṭikaḷā rūraraic*
> *Cittamvait tapukaḻc ciṅkaṭi yappaṉmeyp*
> *Pattaṉū raṉcoṉṉa pāṭumiṉ pattarē*" (37 : 11).

The true *Bhakta* who daily meditates on Him with his mind, praises Him (through his speech) and worships Him (with his body).

IV

The '*Īṭu*' or the commentary on *Nammāḻvār* raises the question, "If the saint is experiencing the Lord, where arises this despair and desolation of '*neytal*'?"

1. 6:5:6.
2. 1;3:10.

In the previous *hymn*, the poet was referring to the Graces of the Lord through the *Purāṇic* stories such as the feast of poison, a feast which the saint feels he cannot see anymore because it happened once upon a time. It is this kind of disappointment that brings about this feeling of despair according to the *Īṭu*.

The *Īṭu* next raises the question, "Where arises the separation when the saint is experiencing the Lord ?" and it offers an explanation. The commentary follows the method of the catechism :

"Food is good, but it brings on disease when there is no hunger. Therefore, the doctor prevents the food coming near the patient. To enable the *Āḻvār* to bear the oncoming experiences, the Lord steps aside for a while, so that the saint may be without the divine bliss for the nonce".

The *Īṭu* next raises the problem whether God is a Doctor and quotes *Periyāḻvār* who has answered the question in the affirmative by describing the Lord as '*Maruttuvaṉ*'. *Nampi Ārūrar* also described the Lord as '*Vaḻittuṇai maruntē*' (70 : 9).

The *Īṭu* continues to ask, "Can this saint, the great, wise master despair ?" The reply is that if he was blessed merely with the knowledge of wisdom he might not have despaired but he was blessed with wisdom taking the form of *Bhakti*. This love for God it is that inspires the despair even where there is no room for despair. That is the characteristic feature of all love. The Lord is so unique, so beautiful, so great and so loving as described by our *Nampi Ārūrar* in the previous *hymn*, that even the thought of the Lord's absence for a while brings on despair making futile even the great wisdom conferred on the saint by God. The *Īṭu* points out, that the embodiment of God's Grace, *Sīta* herself, who ought to know better than anybody else, attempted to commit suicide with her own tresses of hair unable to bear the absence of her Lord.

The next objection raised and answered by the *Īṭu* is whether it is an ancient convention to send birds as messengers of love. Here again the commentator refers to *Rāmāyaṇa*, where *Sītā* addressed the trees and the river begging of them to report to *Rāma* about her abduction by *Rāvaṇa*.

V

The commentator raises another doubt about the masculine-saint becoming the lady-love. He refers to six points of identity of the lady-love with the saint: (1) Being a servant of the Lord (and becoming unfit for the service of others); (2) taking refuge in Him and none else; (3) being alive only when in communion with the Lord; (4) suffering the unbearable despair at the thought of separation; (5) offering happiness unto Him alone; and (6) accepting Him alone as the protector and abiding as the thing to be protected by Him alone. This reference to the saint as a lady-love, the *Īṭu* looks upon as a metaphor. But one may add that the souls and saints stand in the place of the ladies in love with the Lord as their ravisher.

"Will not the masculine qualities subvert this feminine behaviour of the saint?" asks the commentary (*Īṭu*). It answers, "Even men aspire to become women in the presence of the Lord; for, such is the characteristic of the Lord, the *Puruṣōttama,* the best of men.

VI

The commentator raises another question, "How the lady within the palace could get at birds for being sent as her messengers?" In answering this the commentator explains the convention of *Tamiḻ* poetry which we referred to above. In the garden of the sea beach or '*neytal*' there are the birds with wings to quickly reach the Lord and the heroine addresses them without any thought about the possibility of their speaking. As already explained, this kind of address to the birds as messengers is as old as the *Caṅkam* poetry, a convention, which came to be elaborated in later times.

VII

The descriptions of these birds are said to have an esoteric meaning and following the footsteps of the *Īṭu,* one can explain the significance of the birds referred to in *Nampi Ārūrar's hymn* as well. The birds are considered to be the *Guru* or the Master, who brings about the union of the Lord with the soul. The white crane (3) signifies the *Guru's* blotless purity and true *knowledge*. The parrot (2) repeats only what it has learnt without any interpolations — the '*āptavacana*' without introducing one's own whimsical fancies. The swan (10) which separates the milk from the water

represents the *Guru* separating the grain from the husk of knowledge. The '*pūvai*' (2) reminds us of the sweet speech of the Master. The '*veṇṇārai*' (3) — it wanders about all around perhaps for the proper food for its lover and its young ones. That reminds us of the contemplation, love and the kind regard for the student, all characteristics of the *Guru*, working hard for the student's benefit. These white cranes are said to sit on the top of the groves full of leaves without caring to enjoy the shade but intent upon keeping a watch and waiting for the proper food. This reminds us of the *Guru*, keeping always a watch over the surrounding for the benefit of the student without caring for his own comforts. The '*kuruku*' (1) or the water bird perched on the sandy dunes reminds us of the same characteristic features. The humming honey-bees (7) gathering little drops of honey for the bees in the honey-comb reminds us of the untiring study and meditation of the *Guru* for the benefit of the student. The bee does not feed on anything else but the honey; so does the Master on the loving Grace of the Lord and nothing else. The *koel* (9) (*kuyil*) famous for its song reminds us of the sweet speech of the Master. *Cakravāḷa* birds (4) forming a loving couple are complementary to each other, bearing no separation. This reminds us of the Master feeling the indispensability of the student unto the Lord and to himself. The clouds (7) are symbolic of the help showered without any thought of return and this reminds us of the munificence and Grace of the Master.

VIII

The poet describes the pang of separation in every verse as consisting of three stages of development. The first verse speaks of the drinking or enjoying the Lord as though he was a nectar. This experience of communion or embrace as beyond words comes in only to describe the experience after it is over, though it must continue as a sweet remembrance, misleading thus the enjoyer himself into thinking that the experience is still continued. This unique experience of the Lord is so other-worldly, so holy that even the lover falls at His feet and praises Him, as soon as she recovers from the ecstasy of the experience. In the third stage even the remembrance becomes a distant past. The pang of separation comes on with all its force and the lover thinks of the experience with its past and the desolation which is the present, holding out hope for the future. She becomes perturbed, agitated, losing her very form and beauty, very much like things which melt thus,

The fire responsible for this kind of melting is the fire of love. The question arises whether this is all a reference to the present desolation of the past experience. The verbal form used *'parukum'* (1) has to be taken in the sense of a habitual happening thus referring to the Lord blessing therewith His love and then stepping out for a while, as it were playing a game of hide and seek. The love-sick damsel has reached this stage of complete extinguishment — that is her feeling and that is what she expresses. Here also the body, the mind and the speech experience both the communion and the desolation.

The second verse speaks of (1) her incapacity or absolute powerlessness to forget the Lord, (2) of her bangles refusing to stay where they are because — thanks to her burning passion for the Lord — her body has become completely emaciated with no flesh to keep the bangles tight in the position and (3) of her sleeplessness even during nights which bring no peace or rest making her babble and cry. Thus the three *karaṇas* come into play in this state of desolation.

The third verse speaks of the lady-love, in spite of all this desolation, making a last attempt to live for the sake of Him so that He may not be disappointed when He chooses to come back to her. This is such a strain on her slender frame that the emaciation reaches such a stage that the loosening bangles completely fall down. The third stage is reached when this suffering ripens into her bitterness and rancidity, gradually passing through all the stages of suffering to reach this limit of its perfection.

The fourth verse speaks of her as still continuing to be her good old self, without becoming hard on Him for his unkindness, without swerving even to a hair's breadth from her usual path of love. But this is a great strain on her physical frame and, therefore, the bangles in spite of all her efforts, refuse to stand where they are. After this happens, one would expect her to become angry to the extent of taking revenge on Him, but in this third stage of development even when the body refuses to co-operate with her, there is no bad thought engendered in her mind.

The fifth verse speaks of her girdle or clothes gradually getting loose and slipping down because of her body becoming emaciated. The next stage is when the golden bangles fall down. The third stage is when her heaving bosom loses its beauty and colour, becoming anaemic and presenting the colour of the flower

of '*pīrkku*' creeper. (These three stages, instead of referring to her state of desolation are sometimes interpreted as referring to her first meeting with Him at that stage of love at first sight on the basis of '*uṭai peyarttuṭuttal etc.*' mentioned in *Tolkāppiyam*, 1207, *etc.*).

In the sixth verse, she speaks of her seeing Him — that is the first stage. In the next stage the fire of love flares up in her mind. In the third stage this fire consumes her body.

In the seventh verse this reference to three stages is wanting and that was one reason why it may be looked upon as an interpolation. This verse simply refers to her bosom, because of her anaemia, taking the colour of the pale gold.

The eighth verse continues to speak of her sufferings in three different stages—she speaks of her being without any other desire or attachment (except that of the Lord), of her being without any other greatness or power (except that of the Lord) and of her being without any other relations (except that of the Lord). This verse can be better understood in the light of *Appar's* verse:

"Kaṉiyi nuṅkaṭṭi paṭṭa karumpiṉum
Paṉima larkkuḻar pāvainal lāriṉum
Taṉimu ṭikavit tāḷu maraciṉum
Iṉiyaṉ tāṉṉaṭain tārkkiṭai marutaṉē".[3]

"The fruit and the sugar candy are objects of ordinary desire; women represent the most intimate relationship of love; kingship refers to the greatness of Power—These are the three things which man ordinarily aspires for. The Lord is sweeter than they". *Nampi Ārūrar* introduces a slight variation in the enumeration of these three. *Appar*-who had known the intoxication of power and whom passions could not perturb, placed power as the greatest of man's aspirations, but *Ārūrar* who had enjoyed power but who could speak of the embrace of his wife as the experience of divine Grace places human relationship as the highest aspiration. The material desires have vanished first for the love-sick maiden. The ambiton of power next disappears. In the third stage all human relationships vanish.

In the ninth verse the love-sick maiden, a poetess herself, speaks of the three stages of her hankering after the Lord who

3. 5:128:10.

had left her in desolation and whom she goes in quest of. She praises Him and thus tries to find Him. Then she sings in that quest after Him. Third comes her heart melting, silently suffering. The quest of verbose prose, the quest of poetry or music and finally the quest of the silent loving heart form a spiritual development.

The tenth verse represents the hope of the future or rather her dream during this period of separation. She sings the joy of His presence; then she praises and worships Him because of His unique greatness. She embraces and becomes one with Him but only to be in a sulky mood because of His indifference—a feeling which is unconsciously working in the mind.

IX

The way in which the Lord is referred to in this *hymn* of love is important. He is the Lord of beautiful and cool *Ārūr,* full of fields wherein flow nearby the juice of rich sugarcane which had become pressed and crushed because of the water birds rushing at them. This is a good recommendation to the waterbirds which are sent as her messengers of love. This also suggests the feeling of surprise at this kind of order existing in nature which makes the city of the unjust hero to be so very fertile and sweet. Perhaps it also reveals the innermost thought of hers that the Lord is as sweet to her even as the city is. It may also suggest that the reason why He has not chosen to come is that His mind is captivated by this beauty of nature so good for the world (1).

In the second verse the God is addressed as Master, who is fit to be described as the eye of *Dharma* thus assuring the birds that their eyesight can never miss the *Dhārmic* eye of us all and that they can expect no unkind act from Him. It also suggests that the reason for His not coming is His preoccupation with this *Dharma* (2).

The third speaks of the Lord as the Master of the beautiful golden but victorious feet which rule us all. The ruler will always render justice and nobody need be afraid of going near Him, with any just complaint; for, His delay in coming back to the lovesick maiden is suggested as His preoccupation with His rulership and sovereignty (3).

The fourth verse speaks of Him as the master performing things not in any regular order. The Lord makes us fall in love

with Him at first sight showering all His blessings on us all at once; for, He believes in no gradual development of love. This suggests that the Lord is sure to listen to their pleadings on her behalf and that the reason for not coming to her earlier is His preoccupation with such kinds of race for love. The *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators emphasize this aspect of the Lord — the Lord hastening to save us all without believing in blessing us in instalments which makes His lovers also impatient at the separation and incapable of any thought of reaching Him gradually and by stages. (It is possible to interpret the '*akramam*' as the cruelty of the Lord but such an interpretation may not be in consonance with the general trend of this *hymn*) (4).

The fifth verse speaks of Him as the Master holding the weapon of the teasing trident. This trident also ought not to be taken as the sign of His cruelty. This dynamic trident is a symbol and a promise of God's Grace overcoming all obstacles and enemies of His love. It is thus an assurance to these messengers of love that the Lord is there destroying all the obstacles in the way and that the delay in His coming to the love-sick maiden is His preoccupation with such removal (5).

The sixth verse speaks of the Lord as the Master worshipped by the residents of this universe. This encourages the birds that He is the beloved of all the beings of this universe and that the delay if any is due to His preoccupation with these very people of the universe falling at His feet with their prayers (6).

The seventh speaks of Him as our Lord enjoying the bliss of the cow probably referring to the '*Pañcagavya*'. One who is fond of the cow is not going to be hard with these birds or with the damsel; the delay is due to the worship by the followers bathing Him in the '*Pañcagavya*'. ('*Āṉ*' may be the bull with reference to the *Praṇava* or the *Dharma*) (7).

The eighth verse does not describe Him as anything more than the Master. It begs of the birds to tell Him for all that this is the proper juncture for saving the damsel. Nothing more is needed except informing Him thus and He is sure to rush back to save her (8), the Lord of cool and beautiful *Ārūr* surrounded by garments where the serpents dance whilst the *koel* and the bees begin to sing intoxicated with the sweet fragrance of the *kurava* flower (9). (This has to be interpreted in the same way in which the first verse has been interpreted).

The tenth verse describes Him as the Master who is adorned with His gold and victorious anklet. That great Master of art and dance is not going to present a deaf ear to the she-swan, to the musicians of a *koel* and a humming bee — that is the suggested assurance for these messengers of love. The delay is due to His preoccupation with the dance to please His love (10).

X

In the last verse also the poet speaks of the Lord's gold anklet of the Master of *Ārūrar*. The poet calls himself the father of *Ciṅkaṭi,* the true *Bhakta* who has kept within His mind the Lord *Ārūrar.* He begs of these *Bhaktas* to sing these verses of love. What more is necessary than this experience of love expressed in this *hymn* to any God-intoxicated person ? Therefore our poet does not offer any further assurance.

XI

The descriptions of the birds may be conveniently given here. The first verse is addressed to '*kuruku*'; the second to, 'my parrots' which fly and to 'my *pūvai*' which sings. Flight is important at this juncture for carrying her message and that is why that aspect has to be emphasized. The next aspect is that they should express her message and that is why the aspect of singing is referred to (2). The white cranes are said to run all round and labour hard roaming and whirling. This refers to the capacity for going in search of the Lord and enduring all the hardships involved therein (3). The fourth verse is addressed to the '*cakravāḷa*' birds first to the female birds and next only through them to the male birds. *Cakravāḷa* is probably a water bird. It is said that the male and the female will form a complete circle while resting in peace; they do not bear separation. The female birds are first addressed because of the lovesick maiden belonging to the female sex naturally appeals to her sex. It is also considered not proper for a female addressing the male direct without going through its wife. That is why also the appeal is made to the female swan lying in embrace with its male in the tenth verse. The fifth is addressed to the crane sitting on the top of the leafy grove. The sixth is addressed to the bees, to the clouds and to the water birds sitting on the sandy dunes or the long expanse of sand. The seventh is addressed to the honey bees and to the clouds. The eighth is addressed to the white cranes repeating the

same idea of their whirling and roaming completely all round. The ninth is not specifically addressed to any bird even as the first was not. The *koel* and the bee are mentioned perhaps to suggest that this verse may be taken to have been addressed to the *koel* and the bee which may be tempted by this statement about their kith and kin in the land of the hero. The tenth is addressed to the female swan, the *koels* and the bees.

XII

In the white heat of love and passion especially in the feeling of desolation and despair there is no reference to *Purāṇic* descriptions except for the reference to the anklet and the dance (11). This love is according to the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators the mutual love of *Aintiṇai* but *Cēkkiḻār* as already pointed out calls this *'kaikkiḷai'* perhaps because he feels the soul is not the equal half of the Lord. Or, we must take it that the love-sick maiden who is none other than the poet has not embraced or has not the embrace of the Lord, but is only giving expression to one's unrequited love. It is very difficult to justify this interpretation on our reading of this *hymn*. This *hymn* is important and significant as giving clear expression to our poet's mysticism in its aspect of erotic mysticism which is symbolic of the divine experience and which cannot be expressed in any other way.

TIRUVĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 95)

I

Because of the importance of the mystic *hymn* it has been discussed at some length, ourselves following in the footsteps of *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators who represent the best *bhakti* tradition. Therein, one found the complete self-surrender of the poet as the lover of the Lord and his complete confidence in the Lord's Grace. But the world, being what it is, disturbs for a while this great confidence. Our poet has come back to *Tiruvārūr* but unfortunately his eyesight has not yet been completely restored. This drives him into a sulky mood and he almost curses the Lord in the present *hymn* though at the same time he once again expresses his complete confidence and self-surrender. Every poem ends with the expression *'Vāḻntu pōtīrē'* ! — 'You go prosperous' ! The subjective element predominates in this *hymn*. Sometimes the sufferings are expressed as the poet's own, sometimes he reaches the universal stage where he describes the suffering as that of the followers in general as often found in *Ārūrar's* poems. "They have become irredeemable slaves and servants unto you alone, without caring for others. Like the fire which does not easily flare up, inside their mind itself, their suffering was smouldering. Their faces droop and fade a great deal. When these followers of yours serving you, inform you of their sufferings, you keep quiet (without being moved or without any word of assurance). You, the Lord of *Tiruvārūr*, you had better prosper!" (1).

II

"You may sell away, but I am not a hypothec. I lovingly became your servant. I have not committed any mistake. You have made me blind.[1] Why did you take away my eye, my Mas-

1. This meaning of blindness occurs elsewhere in *Tēvāram*, *"Kottaikku mūṅkar vaḻi kāṭṭuvittu"*—1040: 2 of Swaminatha Panditar edition.

ter? The calumny is yours. If you are going to leave off without giving the other eyesight, you had better prosper!" (2).

"The calf hits against the udder of its mother for feeding itself but the cow becomes full with milk and secretes in abundance to be drunk by its calf. Like those cows the *bhaktas* without any break, ever go on singing of you inspired by your love. (They have no other thought except your glorificaton). If the eyes of these followers of yours cannot see and if they dash against a hillock and fall into the pit, well, you had better prosper!" (3).

"Your followers full of love for you, express their miseries to you but you keep them in that state of misery and suffering and order for them only blessings for the next birth. If this must be so, well, you had better prosper!" (4).

"Our Lord! Is this the end to which they come, they who come to serve? These *Bhaktas* who sing in varied rhythms, have not eyes to see; if these, in their blindness come to you and cry, 'O, Our Lord! Is this just?' (You keep mum). Well! You had better prosper!" (5).

"It is not because of want of wealth that they grow emaciated. Their eyes become blind and could not see. Their minds suffer. If that is how your followers (have to) sit brooding, well, You had better prosper!" (6).

"O, Our Lord! Is this what becomes of those who come to serve? You display the delusions. You bring us our births. You bring about our mind which does not forget you. You bring about this body and the *Bhaktas* stand full of tears in their eyes. If this is what happens to them, well, You had better prosper!" (7).

"We were born in no bemeaning clan (elsewhere we have interpreted this as referring to the poet's superior birth of a Brahmin, but we had occasion to refer to our poet's conception of a community of *Bhaktas* and it is to this he must be referring here; for, the next sentence following this about birth speaks only about the characteristics of the *Bhaktas*). We praise you without any derision. Our Lord! You do not know that this is calumny or sin, if we, the *Bhaktas* who sing of you, sit with a confused whirling mind without seeing the way out; well, You had better prosper; You that have become the lagoon and the sea near the lagoon, the ship on the sea, the land as the shore to be reached by the

ship and also the words connected with the experience of all these !" (8).

"All others say that it is cruel to separate even for once though it be from the devil. If your mind is intent on that and if you attain and accept it, even the unripe fruit, if it is loved, is it not as good as the sweet ripe fruit? Those who had come to serve, roam about in the centre, like a dutiful and grateful dog. If you do not open your mouth (in reply) to these servants, well, You had better prosper !" (9).

"We sit, we stand, we lay ourselves down; in whatever position we may be, we praise you without slighting you. We come all the way suffering and if we express to you our sufferings — well, You had better prosper (if you care not to listen to us and to shower your blessings on us)!" (10).

III

That this *hymn* is sung in a sulky mood is made clear by the last verse where the poet calling himself "*Ārūr-t tirumūlaṭṭāṉattē aṭippēr Ārūraṉ*"—'*Ārūraṉ,* who bears the name of the Lord in the *garbhagṛha* of *Ārūr,*' complains, 'You have taken away my eyesight. The cities of the whole world know this. You alone have become calumniated. You have appropriated Yourself half the body of the damsel of ribbon tucked up bosom, well, You had better prosper !" (11).

IV

The poet describes the holy place of *Ārūr* and the descriptions become one with the context. The Lord is inside *Ārūr* of the groves where come to rest without fail the '*aṉṟil*' couple (3). The erotic symbolism of the previous *hymn* is still working in the mind of the poet and this description suggests that the Lord of the place where even the loving couple of birds are never disappointed, should not disappoint His lovers, *viz.,* His followers. The tradition has suggested that our poet has been hankering after *Tiruvārūr* and at the sight or rather on reaching *Tiruvārūr,* which he could not clearly see because he did not completely recover from his blindness, he exclaims, "Is this *Tiruvārūr,* of the groves where '*ceruntī*' puts forth its golden flowers and where shine the red and cool corals ?" (10). And again the poet who had addressed the white crane in the previous *hymn* as the messenger of love laid the

emphasis there on the whiteness of the wings which must carry the bird to the Lord for carrying the message of love. The erotic imagery continues here, and the poet speaks of the crane reaching *Tiruvārūr,* but here the crane has to sit or stand comfortably for delivering the message and the emphasis, therefore, is on the beautiful red leg appearing like the stem of the millet plant (6). The groves of *Ārūr* comes to his mind as the place where the swarm of birds, those messengers of love of the previous *hymn,* reach for rest, along with these loving couples. (7).

V

God is addressed as the Lord (*Aṭikaḷ* - 5); as the Great Man (*Perumāṉ* - 5); as One who is responsible for the illusion of the world, for births, and ultimately also for our mind which in the end never forgets the Lord (7) and as One who is the back water, the sea, the ship and the shore and the word describing these (8). (These seem to suggest the narrower experience of the world leading us on to the sea of births and deaths where one, if fortunate enough to get hold of the ship of confidence or reliance on God's feet, reaches the other shore of divine bliss. He is also the words — the '*sabdha prapañca*' expressing this experience).

VI

Our poet as usual in his *hymn* of subjective experience has not room enough for describing the *Purāṇic* stories. Here in this *hymn,* he refers to the Lord of the mat-lock, the twisted and dull mat-lock adorned with the gold-like garland of *koṉṟai* (6) and to His black throat (11), High eight arms (11), His three eyes (11), and His innumerable arts or knowledge (11) which are all but the forms of the Lord. The Lord, it is, who resides in the temples. The temple cult is thus emphasized especially in the fourth verse where the poet says, "You reside in *Turutti; Pāḻaṉam* is you city; You rule over *Cōṟṟutturai;* You have *Tiruvārūr* for your rendezvous; it is not necessary to speak of your residence of our mind (for you are not taking care of us much less the temple of our mind)".

VII

This *hymn* shows how pure and faultless is our poet. This is important also as singing the glories of the *Bhaktas* for whom

the poet is making a special pleading, for, after all, he is one of them. The *Bhaktas* are like him lovers of the Lord, songsters and poets, always praising Him, representing the worship through poetry, music and love.

VIII

This *hymn* is peculiar in that it does not assure us of any good effect flowing from the recitation or mastery of this *hymn* probably because besides being purely a personal appeal the recitation is itself an inexpressible bliss.

CHAPTER LXXX

TIRUPPUNKŪR

(*Hymn* 55)

I

In this *hymn* as in his previous *hymn* on *Tiruvāvaṭuturai* (66), our poet refers to certain *Purāṇic* stories which have inspired him to take refuge in the feet of the Lord. This similarity or identity of thought strengthens the suggestions that these *hymns* should belong to one single period. The first verse refers to the story of the Lord saving *Mārkkaṇḍēya,* the Brahmin lad from the Lord of Death and going to the extent of doing away with the life of that *Kāla,* who was after all, following the regular law of nature. "I have seen or realized your munificence", exclaims the poet and continues, "O, my Father ! Thinking that if the followers of Death attack me, you will prevent them from taking away my life by pointing out to them that I am your slave and servant, I have come and taken refuge in your feet" (1).

II

The same idea, but with other *purāṇic* stories is repeated in every verse. Every verse ends with the words, *"Celumpolil Tiruppuṉkūruḷāṉē"*. In v. 3, it is *Pūmpoḻil* instead of *celumpoḻil* and in 4, *'Poykaicūḻ'*. *"Aṭiyaṭaintēṉ"* immediately precedes this (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). *'Aṭi'* is preceded by either, *'Uṉ Tiru'* or *'Niṉ Tiru'*. In verse 3, it is *'Niṉ poṉṉaṭi'* instead of *'Niṉ Tiruvaṭi.'* In verse 4, *'Niṉ kuraikalal'* occurs at the end of the third line.

In the second verse, the poet refers to the story of a famine when there was not a drop of water in the fields because the clouds came to be even forgotten. The people prayed to the Lord for saving them and offered to Him twelve *'vēlis'* of land. At once coming as the white cloud it rained. There was a dangerous flood and again the people prayed to the Lord. Once more the Lord saved them and received another twelve *'vēlis'* of land. Having seen this act of yours, I have taken refuge in you. (This word 'seeing the act' is repeated almost in every verse; since all these acts belong to the ancient past, the poet could not refer to his

being a contemporary spectator. It is, therefore, necessary to interpret it as meaning realizing the truth of the acts of God).

The third verse refers to *Ēyarkōṉ* and to God relieving of his disease or fetters. As this is mentioned with reference to the twelve *'vēlis'* of land we had already suggested that it was "*Ēyarkōṉ*" who prayed for and offered this land. The disease must be the mental anguish which *Ēyarkōṉ* felt when the land was suffering from famine. If *Ēyarkōṉ* were to be a contemporary of *Nampi Ārūrar* and according to us of *Rājasiṁha,* inscriptions and contemporary writings bear witness to the severe famine which afflicted the *Tamiḻ* country during that period. [(1) *'Dandin's Rājasundara Kathā;* (2) *Vajrabōdhi's* life from Chinese sources: See Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1900, p. 418 — article by Sylvain Levi; (3) Administration and Social Life under the *Pallavas* by Dr. *Mīnākshi,* p. 112].

In this verse our poet refers to *Caṇḍēśvara* who cut away the feet of his father, who kicked the white sand of *Śiva* (the story already given: See *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* Saints) and whom the Lord blessed with His own garlands. Our poet exclaims, "Seeing this extraordinary blessing of yours, O, Lord of *Bhūtas* or souls! I have taken refuge in your feet".

The fourth verse is very significant as giving us *Nampi Ārūrar's* gospel of Grace, a gospel which brings out the truth of the parable of the prodigal son. Our poet has referred to the loving behaviour of the Lord which considers even the faults as our good qualities: "*Kuṟṟañceyyiṉum kuṇameṉak koḷḷum koḷkai*" reminds us of *hymn* No. 69, where also it is stated, "*Kuṟṟamē ceyyiṉum kuṇameṉak koḷḷum koḷkaiyāl*". What is much more significant is that he enumerates a number of saints whose faults our God has accepted as their greatness, *viz., Ñāna Campantaṉ,* that great master of good laurel, *Nāviṉukkaraiyaṉ, Nāḷaippōvāṉ,* the learned *Cūtaṉ,* the good *Cākkiyaṉ,* the spider, *Kaṇṇappaṉ,* and *Kaṇampullaṉ.* These we have discussed in our chapter on *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* Realizing this conviction of yours, I have taken refuge in your feet of jingling victorious anklets.

The fifth verse refers to the churning of the ocean and the swallowing of the poison coming out of it. "O, Madman! Seeing this characteristic behaviour of yours, I have taken refuge in your feet".

The sixth verse refers to all sorts of people good and bad, worshipping the Lord and receiving His blessings, worshipping without fatigue or forgetfulness. It looks as though all their lives form one continuous rite of worship. "*Yakṣas, Kiṉṉaras, Yama, Varuṇa,* the Fire, the wind, the Sun and the Moon, the clean-hearted tiger, the monkey, the serpent, the *Vasus,* the *Dēvas* and the *Tānavas*—all have worshipped and received your blessings. Seeing this all, my confusions and doubts have ceased and I have taken refuge in your feet".

The seventh refers to the *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* form expounding *Dharma* to the Brahmin Saints. It refers to the story of *Arjuna* receiving the *pāśupata* weapon and to *Bhagīratha* begging the Lord to receive the *Ganges* on His mat-lock. The Lord is, therefore, the Lord of purity and, therefore, the poet says he has taken refuge in Him.

The eighth verse refers to the three aerial cities. This has been referred to in almost all the *hymns* but it is only in *hymn* 70:3 sung almost in this period that our poet emphasizes the fact that this destruction itself is a great blessing to the Lords of the three cities. That idea is made clearer in this *hymn* in verse No. 8. Their cities were destroyed but the rulers were saved by the Saviour, the Lord; two of them became the gatekeepers of the Lord and the third became important as the person playing on the drum or '*maṇimuḻā*' whilst the Lord dances to please his consort. "This act of unique love, O, *Dēva* of *Dēvas*", our poet exclaims, "has inspired me to take refuge in your feet".

The ninth verse is significant as giving our poet's philosophy of harmony. He says the Lord has showered His rare Grace on all those great men, following the six great philosophies, great for that wisdom and knowledge. He showered the blessings on all these whilst they were following their respective paths. In verse 6, our poet brought out that every living being in this universe has received the blessings of the Lord and in this verse he emphasizes that the very path leads to His Grace.

He next refers to the story of *Rāvaṇa* first getting himself crushed and then receiving the divine sword and the long life when he became repentant and began to sing verses of sweet music. This embracing love of the Lord has inspired our poet to take refuge in His feet.

In the last verse the poet refers to the Lord as one who had flayed the skin of the elephant and who had destroyed the Lord of passion with His eye in the forehead, as one who has the beautiful form resembling pure gold, the ruler of the Heavens, the Lord of *Umā,* who resides in the city of *Tiruppuṉkūr.* Our poet *Ūraṉ, Vaṉroṇṭaṉ,* has with an elated mind given expression to his love in these rare *Tamiḻ* verses. Our poet has experienced whilst singing this *hymn* of taking refuge in the Lord, a feeling of complete freedom from those *karmas* so very difficult otherwise to escape from. He assures that those who master this *hymn* will undergo the same experience of becoming devoid of all *karmas.* This *hymn* is a *hymn* of *purāṇic* stories. It is not necessary to enumerate the stories once again.

III

The holy place is described in every verse as being characterized by rich or fertile groves. The fourth verse adds that it is characterized by a tank where abound lotuses, gems and heaps of gold, even as our poet conceives our Lord as abounding in this kind of wealth and beauty.

IV

This doctrine of Grace expounded in this *hymn* is something different from what is usually represented as the Christian doctrine. For one thing no Hindu believes that the soul is in essence a slave of *Satan.* Hindu thought holds every soul as potentially divine—a limb of divinity or its reflection, though it may be enshrouded in the *māyā* or ignorance. What is aimed at is the perfection, the full blossoming of this divinity. It is not a self negation, unless one were to speak of the seed becoming a tree as self-negation. Everything is divine in the universal vision and what appears as defect and evil are due to the defect in the vision. The most valuable and useful thing becomes dirt and rubbish when misplaced and seen out of joint. When put in the proper place or utilized in the right manner it becomes a source of power, happiness and beauty. Is not the modern age speaking of wealth from waste? As in the material sphere, so in the spiritual sphere. The prodigal son has a valuable place in the scheme of things ennobling and deifying the love of the father. So does every thing of this universe. That is the message of the story of all cruel beings listening to the teachings of the Lord. Every activity is

a worship and that is how it appears to our saint who sees this universal vision of worship by all the beings including the serpents and lions. The natural law and moral law are not displaced by the law of Lord's Grace even as there is no displacement of the natural law when wealth is created out of waste.

The *karma* is not only individual but also social as the *Gīta* insists. Does not the Psycho-analyst speak of race memory? Is not our body itself experiencing in its development from the embryo the various stages of evolution the living beings of the world underwent. Salvation, therefore, should also be social and that is why it is spoken of as the spiritual sphere of the eternals forming into a whole of the Divine Being. There is here no hankering after physical pleasure. Pleasure is not always the consummation of a virtuous life. Mental equanimity is different from wealth: "*Tiru vēṟu teḷḷiyar ātalum vēṟu*" (*Kuṟaḷ*)—'Life of true wisdom and clear vision is different from life of material wealth.' Material or political success and failure are not spiritual success and failure. Our poet might have proved a political failure but that does not affect his spiritual eminence. That is the message of *Periapurāṇam.* Our poet may cry and suffer; but we do not see him losing his mental balance and moral grandeur. He is not, however, refusing the richness of even the material life. He is an expert in the art of life. Everything is God's gift in that universal vision and, therefore, our poet begs for all the means of livelihood which thus ceases to be material and become symbols of divine Grace. Therefore, there is no negation of life nor is there a glorification of the Bohemian life. There is no inducement to do evil. The doctrine of Grace does not cancel the doctrine of moral greatness. If harmony is restored, if the mind is changed, the evil is wiped out and divinity till now seemingly enshrouded in darkness begins to shine and encompass everything within itself. Divine Grace helps here. This revelation of the mind is spoken of as taking refuge in the Lord when there is no selfishness or self-conceit but only the dawn of the universal consciousness serving the whole and the Absolute to attain its perfection.

CHAPTER LXXXI

TIRUNĀKAIKKĀRŌṆAM

(*Hymn* 46)

I

In this *hymn,* the poet is in a humorous mood, though not relieved of his wants. He addresses the Lord, as he would, an intimate friend of his. It is probably on the basis of this *hymn* that our poet is considered to have followed the path of friendship and *yōga.* The *Bhikṣāṭana* form is occupying the central place in his mind. He speaks to *Bhikṣāṭana* in a jocular vein even as the damsels of *Dārukavaṉa* would have. Verses Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 refer directly to this *Bhikṣāṭana* form. Our poet refers to the Lord going a-begging, wearing bones (1), riding on the bull (1, 4), with His serpents on the mat-lock (3), His ornament of a young tortoise shell (3), His begging bowl of a *kapāla* (3), His crescent moon (3), His damsel of a mountain (3, 6), His *vīṇā,* (4), His *pēy* (4), His deer (10), His *bhūta* (6) and His vanquishing *Rāvaṇa* though in the end showering blessings on him, when he began singing divine *hymns* (7).

Our poet demands of the Lord to provide for him the livelihood (9, 10) and to provide him with all the necessaries and luxuries of life (1, 8, 10, 11). He refers to the *purāṇic* stories also in a humorous vein in this context. "This world of earth and the world of heavens are under your sovereignty. I do not know much about *Subrahmaṇya,* the young son of the golden doll-like daughter of the mountain king. As for *Gaṇapathy,* the other son, he is with the big belly and eats away innumerable things; he knows nothing. My Lord! Is this fair? Pray tell me" (9). "Will the doll-like daughter of the mountain king put up with your escapades of love?" (3). "Is it real *tapas* or an act of beauty that inspires the damsels with confounding love?" (4). "If you do not provide me with the livelihood for my body on a firm basis, I shall besiege you (sit *Dhāraṇā*) making your form suffer. Don't accuse me tomorrow that I am hard-hearted and cruel in my acts" (9).

II

This is the general trend of this *hymn* describing in the first few lines, the Lord according to the *purāṇas* and then beginning to refer to His special relationship with the poet making a request for many things of life and closing with the words "*Kaṭal Nākaikkārōṇam mēviyiruntīrē*". "You have fed me with a mixture of margosa and sweet sugar-cane (possibly referring to the Lord providing with happy and unhappy experience). I begged of you for my livelihood. You entered *Turutti* and sat there. If you begin to frighten or charm me with your mat-locks and serpents, I cannot (be coerced to) agree to all these. I have suffered and laboured many a time. You entered and sat there at *Tiruvārūr* shining with '*ceṅkaḻunīr*' and '*cēmpu*' in its cool moat. You must order for me '*kāmpu* and *nēttiram*' (These are according to the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators two kinds of silk but some people take these as meaning walking stick and spectacles probably thinking that the poet was suffering still from defect of eyesight)" (2). "To remove all my sufferings, pray tell me when you are going to give me the golden bullion?" (4). "O, beautiful One! Placing on my head the duty of service, on me who had been roaming about as your '*toṇṭaṉ*' or servant, you must order for me from the treasury, clothes and ornaments, starting with good fragrant things. There is a *pramāṇa*, or a precedence for it" (5). What this precedence is, is referred to in verse 7. "In the city of *Vīḻimi-ḻalai*, you daily offered gold coins, so that your followers of love might eat without suffering (Reference is to the gift of coins to *Campantar* and *Appar*). "Today you must give me" (7). It is on the basis of this precedence the poet is claiming all these luxuries from the treasury. "What is this pretension or cheating that you do not order silk or sandal paste?" (1). "You do not say anything in reply. You sit quiet. You accepted me as your slave promising me to make me live usefully or gloriously. I am your slave, generation after generation. You have enough of money. You have not become poor. Of that rare treasure poured into beautiful *Ārūr*, I want one third. If you do not give me, I shall not allow you take even one foot-step. I want for riding, a fast running horse moving like the wind. Stating that you will give me a big treasury, you accepted me as though you were one capable person (of fulfilling the promise" (8). "Speaking false things you entered into *Kiḻvēḷūr* and stayed there. Will I be duped by you? If your sovereignty is

current here, I want a golden armour or scimitar full of shining brightness with dots interspersed. On the top of it, I want golden flowers and a sash. I want thrice a day, ghee-rice with side dishes, O, Lord!" (10). "O, Lord who was the prop for *Paravai* of musical words, of *Caṅkili* and myself, whom else have I? I am true to you. You must fulfil my prayer. I want shining pearls, garlands for wearing, shining silk, flower, musk, so beautiful for the eye and also fragrant sandal" (11). *Turutti, Ārūr* and *Kīlvēḷūr* are mentioned where something must have happened.

III

In singing this *hymn* the poet must have experienced as if enjoying the luxuries of heaven. Therefore, the poet assures those who master this *hymn* that they will be rulers of heaven even as he must have felt himself to be whilst singing this *hymn*.

IV

Nakai, the present Negapatam or *Nākappaṭṭiṉam,* is on the seashore. Hence our poet calls it a '*Kaṭal Nākai*'. It was one of the important sea-ports of the *Pallava* period, where the foreigners had built a temple for the *Buddha*. *Kārōṇam* is *Kayārōhaṇam,* the temple of the *Lākulīśa* sect.

Our poet describes this Negapatam as being full of Royal roads where abound palaces of precious stones so sweet to look at (3). It is so full of wealth where dance the peacock-like damsels (6).

PART VII

UNTO THE LAST

Introduction

I

The *hymns* included in this part belong to the last period of our Poet's life.

The *Nākaikkārōṇam hymn* suggests that the poet has come back to play an important part in the political life of the country. It is significant that in this part of his life, he does not go north of *Vēdāraṇyam* and *Tiruvaiyāṟu*. It is the first time that our poet enters the *Pāṇḍya* country and his *hymns* give expression to this new experience. He also goes through the *Koṅku* country, to the country of the *Cēras*. We know the *Tamiḻ* kings were opposed to *Nandivarma*, the *Pallavamalla*, who came to the throne after *Rājasiṁha's* successor, and they were supporting a prince of the direct line of *Rājasiṁha*. In the end *Nandivarma* was successful. Probably it is this kind of political trouble which cast its shadow in the last part of our poet's life. Perhaps he was the supporter of *Nandivarma's* rival which will explain why he is found during the period only in the *Pāṇḍya* and *Cēra* countries and also singing his *Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam hymn* in the presence of the three *Tamiḻ* kings.

The *hymns* of our third part, it was suggested by us, should belong to this period. *Pāṇṭikkoṭumuṭi hymn* which occurs in the third part is on the temple which *Rājasiṁha Pāṇḍya* is said to have specifically worshipped according to the epigraphical reports (*Tēr-māṟaṉ*, son of *Kōccaṭaiyaṉ* who according to Dubreuil married the daughter of *Rājasiṁha*, the *Pallava* ruler, after whom his grandson, the *Pāṇḍya* king was named). There is a spirit of renunciation running through this *hymn* rather a natural loosening of attachment to this world, a readiness and fitness to renounce this world if God decides so. The last *hymn* on Mount *Kailās* expresses the inexpressible final salvation.

It is true that there are *hymns* on *Ārūr* but they may be taken to have been sung when the poet was far from that favourite place of expressing his love and anxiety to go back to that city. We have

noticed our poet's great attachment to *Tiruvārūr* and his singing about *Tiruvārūr* from *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr*. In this part in *Tiruvaiyāṟu hymn*, he asserts that he is thinking of *Tiruvārūr* (*Tiruvārūrē cintippaṉ* — 77 : 11). The 59th *hymn* on *Tiruvārūr* cries, "Is it possible to forget the Lord of *Tiruvārūr*?" Therefore, our poet need not have gone back to *Tiruvārūr* to sing these *hymns*. The *hymns* of this part are very important as showing the highest spiritual state attained by our poet.

II

Our poet's heart expresses itself as follows in these *hymns*: "The place, the Lord likes most is *Maṟaikkāṭu*" (*H.* 71); "Why are You, O, Lord, all alone in this place ?" (*H.* 32); "Is this *Pūvaṇam,* where resides the Lord?" (*H.* 11); "We are afraid of serving you, O, Lord!" (*H.* 2); "The Lord who resides at *Tirukkēṭīccaram* removes the *karmas* and miseries of His followers" (*H.* 80); "Those who worship the Lord of *Tirucculiyal* will be happy devoid of their miseries" (*H.* 82); "When am I, the servant, to see and worship this Youth residing at *Kāṉappēr*?" (*H.* 84). "O, my mind! Instead of cursing me, think of *Puṉavāyil,* the ancient city of the Lord" (*H.* 50); "O, Father of *Ārūr*! I am afraid of this illusory body" (*H.* 8); "Is this the Lord of *Tiruvaiyāṟu*?" (*H.* 77); "Is there nothing else for the Lord except these serpents, etc.? Please, do not speak of deserting Him, O, *Bhaktas!*" (*H.* 44). "Is it possible to forget the Lord of *Ārūr,* who is all for me" (*H.* 59); "O, our Patron ! Why are you here in this cruel and desolate place of *Tirumurukaṉpūṇṭi?*" (*H.* 49); "How can I forget you, my Lord of *Avināci* ?" (*H.* 92). "Why have you done this and that, O, my father of *Añcaikkaḷam* ?" (*H.* 4); "The best One of *Noṭittāṉmalai* has blessed me thus to reach *Kailās*" (*H.* 100).

III

Our poet who had lost all confidence with the king of this world addresses the Lord now as the king: '*Uttamaṉ*' or the Best (100 : 1). As usual he calls the Lord, *Śivaṉ, Paramaṉ, Pacupati, Paramēṭṭi, Śaṅkaraṉ, Puṇṇiyaṉ, Maṇavāḷaṉ*. The *aṣṭamūrtas* are also mentioned. The conception of the Lord as *Amudu* is repeated. Here occurs the beautiful phrase "*Cuntaraccōti*", 'the Flame of Beauty'. He is the Lord of the beautiful form who has however conquered the five senses, the latter description reminding us of '*Poṟivāyil aintavittāṉ*' of *Tirukkuṟaḷ* (*Tiruk.*: 5). He is the ruler of *Dharma*. He removes our *karmas*; the formless Lord

becomes the Lord of forms. He is everything and He is the very organs of our senses as well as things enjoyed and the enjoyer. This universal form is really frightening even unto the followers. He resides in our heart. He is the Before and the After. Doubts are no good. We must wait, consider and worship Him alone in this ephemeral world, where everything is nauseating and revolting. He is the great sound evolving out of *Nāda*. He offers the final release and salvation.

IV

The good results attained by the reciters of the *hymns* are given as usual in the last verses. Eternal fame, residence in *Amarulakam,* or *Śivalōka* of great fame, becoming the chief of the eternals ruling the whole Heavens, becoming the citizens of God when words yield their fruit, conquest of Death and Birth, freedom from miseries, obstacles and mental agitations, attachment to truth, sacrifice, achievement of goodness of a blotless heart, becoming *Bhaktas* and singing the *hymns* are as usual described as the great ideal of *Śaivites.*

V

Nature occupies a much more important place in these *hymns.* Perhaps the political failures have not affected his spiritual equanimity in enjoying Nature as the very form of the Lord. The desolation of the places visited does not fail to suggest an atmosphere of worship. Even the ships seem to bend low and worship the Lord. The sea-ports come in these *hymns.* The *Kāviri* is also described.

VI

Worship with flowers and water, with *Pancagavya,* offerings of gold and gems, playing by *Bhaktas* on *Kallavaṭam* drum, learning the holy name of the Lord, uttering his 1000 names, contemplation on the Lord, melting in love, becoming almost one with the Lord, self-surrender and service, worship by the learned, worship of the feet of the *Bhaktas* are all mentioned. All kinds of worship are valid but self-surrender and service unto the Lord are considered very important.

TIRUMAṞAIKKĀṬU

(*Hymn* 71)

I

After all these upheavals, the poet's mind begins now to flow like a calm stream in an even ground. The metrical pattern of the stanzas remind us of *hymns* No. 91 and 94, but the trend of this common majestic flow is different from the trotting and galloping march of the other *hymns*. "The place of the Lord (whose descriptions are given) is *Maṟaikkāṭu* of the natural beauties (described)"—This is the pattern of the stanza. Every verse ends with the phrase '*Maṟaikkaṭē*'. '*Iṭam*' or place coming after the genitive case thus making a genitive compound occurs usually in the second line (1, 4, 5, 6, 7) or in the first line (2, 3, 8) or in the 3rd line also (*V*. 8). The ninth verse is of a different pattern: "You worship this holy place of *Maṟaikkāṭu*". The word *Maṟaikkāṭu* occurs as usual at the end of the fourth line and the words 'you worship' occur at the end of the second line (9).

II

As usual when our poet is calm he loves describing the *purāṇic* stories. The Lord's company of the Mother, who is here described as '*Yāḻaip paḻittaṉṉa moḻi maṅkai*' (1) a phrase which has become the name of the Goddess of this place, His mat-lock (1, 5, 6, 8), His crescent moon (1, 2, 7), His exposition of the four *Vēdas* and the *aṅgas* (3), *His pañcavaṭi* (4), His *Ganges* (5, 8), His bull (6), His battle-axe (6), His garland of *koṉṟai* (6), His dark throat (7), His eight shoulders (9), His three eyes (9) are all referred to. (The significance of the *Pañcavaṭi* had already been explained by us)

III

Our poet brings in his own personal relationship with the Lord. He calls Him, 'Our king' (8) and describes the Lord of Grace symbolized by the blue throat as He who 'removing all the

weeds of powerful *karmas* performed in the previous birth or before, saves me or accepts me as His servant' (7). He also refers to Him as the *Uttamaṉ* (4), 'as the best man' of words of fame, "*Urai viraviya Uttamaṉ*" (4). He addresses the mind, "O, mind, that had started knowing or experiencing the Lord; O, mind, start at once for worshipping and praising without thinking of getting into doubts" (5). In two verses, he states, "We have known the place of the Lord" (3, 8).

IV

The natural description of this holy place seems to occupy a much important place in this *hymn* than anything else. Our poet describes, so to say, certain visions of natural beauty. In the first vision, he sees a dwarfish young monkey passing through a cocoanut garden or a grove of sword flowers. It enters through a small opening and eats the fruits of the plaintain (1). "The tidal flow of the sea reaches the garden on the sea-board; the fragrant '*takara*' tree stands in these tidal waters. In between these trees come in the '*makara*' and the shark perhaps to enjoy the shade of the group of '*tāḻai*' and '*ñāḻal*' " (2). (The *makara* originally a name of the shark, has developed to signify a fabulous sea animal, springing and developing thus from the imagination of sculptors whose work even in the *Pallava* age has given a wonderful conception of their *makara* especially in the arches like '*makara tōraṇas*' on the top of niches). "The tides bring with them from the deep sea, the lustre of the pearl inside the conch and the coral reef. It looks as though they are throwing out on to the shore" (5) (perhaps in return for the enjoyment of the shade offered). "There are cocoanut trees and the tall *palmyra* trees on the beach. Their fruits fall down in that expanse of sand" (3) (with their peculiar sound, an experience which none can forget). This upsets the calm equanimity of the sea-life. "The frightened conches, shining oysters and the '*valampuri*' (right twisting conch) become stumbling blocks to the ships after this fright. Stumbling on them the boats or ships get their equilibrium disturbed and they bend too much towards this holy place of *Maṟaikkāṭu* on the shore of the sea, suggesting the idea that the ship with the high mast worships the place as though folding up the hands right up above the crown" (3).

The description of the fourth verse is not clear especially the phrase '*kulai cēkarak koṇṭal*'. There is the noise of the sea pro-

bably because of the eastern wind, the *'koṇṭal'*. "The big breakers of the sea rise up so high that their crown splits. The eastern wind struggles against these waves. It goes again and dashes against the shore" (4). "The great expanse of the sea which is beautiful, pushes the rare and valuable gems towards the shore so as to enable them to get on to the beach and brings the ship and the shark to be thrown on to the shore" (5). "There is the wide expanse of the sea. In between the sea and the sandy beach flow the back waters in channels, in canals. Near them stand the sword flower plant (*kaitai*) cool, bright and fragrant. In its blades rests the white water bird and this bird wakes up disturbed by the blue waters of the sea, dashing against the place where it rests" (6). "There is the paddy field where the paddies are grown and their ripe sheafs bend down. There rush in, the carps in that eastern sea near the extensive sand. The sea brings the conch with the bent nose and the *'calañcalam'*, the emperor of the conches and throws them out on to the shore" (7). "It is a great beauty. It is full of honey bees" (8) "where the sea brings the *'valampuri* and *calañcalam'* conches to be thrown on to the shore" (8). "The blue waters of the sea surrounds the cool groves of the place where play the six legged bees" (9).

V

In this *hymn*, the poet refers to the *Buddhists* and the Jains and speaks of their stoutness and nakedness. He also refers to the short garment or dress. One wonders whether this reference is to the *Ājīvakas*. These had their visions wherein stood revealed to them the cause of misery of the world. Our poet begs of the followers not to think of these but to worship the Lord (9).

VI

As against these philosophies, our poet refers to his message of poetry and music by describing God as the Lord of seven musical notes (9). Our poet describes himself as the king of the people of *Nāvalūr* of fertile fields surrounded by many a city of this world. He also gives his name as *Ārūraṉ*. He assures those servants of the Lord who would sing these garlands of *Tamiḻ* that they will become full of fame growing with the earth surrounded by the water, *i.e.*, their fame will last as long as this world. This is one of the places (See 73 : 11) where our poet speaks of fame as the great ideal to be aimed by the followers of

the Lord. The word '*vēntaṉ*' as describing the Lord is significant suggesting that this *hymn* belongs to the period of his political pre-occupation. Fame according to *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* is the eternal mark left by our ephemeral life if usefully spent, thus conquering in its own way death and oblivion ever trying to smother us down. The poets live for ever through their poems which thus become embodiments of their fame. Our poet also, therefore, looks upon this fame as ideal, especially when his poetry consists of divine praises.

TIRUKKŌṬIKKUḺAKAR

(*Hymn* 32)

I

The poet's mind is now fully immersed in the temple cult and he speaks to the God there, in an intimate way. This temple — one cannot be sure whether there was a temple there—is at the place which is now known as Pt. Calimere, a kind of small cape and, therefore, it is called *'Kōṭi'*. The God of the temple is known as *'Kuḻakar'* or the youth. Without using the epicene plural, our poet endearingly addresses the Lord *'Kuḻakā'* (2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8) but the first verse addresses Him as *'Kuḻakīr'*; the ninth verse addresses Him as *'Aṭikēḷ'* while the 5th verse contains no address whatever; the last verse mentions the Lord merely as *'Kuḻaku'*. He is surrounded by *Bhaktas* who sing about Him (3). Our poet describes the Lord as *'Paramā'* (3), the Supreme; and *'Empirāṉ'* (3, 6, 7 and 8) 'Our Patron'. He is also addressed as *'Iṟaivā'* (7) 'the King or the All Pervasive', and *'Amutē'* (7) 'the nectar'.

II

Our poet refers to the *Purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord referring to His feast of poison (2), His rendezvous of a graveyard (4), His company of the Mother (4, 5, 6), of the *Ganges* (5) and the Lady of the Forest (5), His dance (7), His crescent moon (8), His begging (9) and His being beyond the reach of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (9). Our poet refers to *'Oṟṟiyūr'* and *'Ārūr'* punning on these names as usual (8).

III

This *Kōṭi* is also described. The *Kōṭi* is surrounded by gardens which never lose their greatness (2), which never get reduced in beauty which are full of bunches of flowers (3), of *'kurava'* (6) and full of beauty. This place is to the south of *Maṟaikkāṭu* (3, 6, 10) which is surrounded by very many cities of this world (10). This *Maṟaikkāṭu* is surrounded by *'Ūmattam'* flowers (3) and full

of the fragrance of *'marava'* flowers. (6). Our poet brings about the desolation of the place. The sea wind comes and dashes on the shore with cruel force (1). Many cruel hunters live on that shore (9). The slaves, these hunters, are great sinners and wicked people (4) and there is not a good citizen nearby (1, 2, 3, 7, 8). Compared to this place, the graveyard is pure, holy and great (4). The owls, the big owls, creep inside the holes of trees (4).

IV

The temple and the idol appear to him the very incarnation of God and this is made clear by the pang of exclamation proceeding from his heart at the sight of the Lord being in a desolate place (1, 2, 3, 7, 8) of hunters (4, 9). "Ah! I a cruel person! Alas! My eyes have seen this, Your residence in this desolate place where the sea-wind plays havoc. Will that be a great fault, if there were to be citizens residing nearby. O, Lord! With whom as help do you stay here?" (1). "Why are you, our patron, all alone! Is it because you once feasted on the poison yielded by *'paravai'*—the sea, that later you helped its namesake *'Paravai'* (my consort)?" (2). "On what account are you alone?" (3). "The graveyard is purer and greater. Ah! You have enshrined yourself in this place with the shrieking omenous owls (4) to the great fright of the damsel of your wife" (5, 6). "You are there with darkness alone as your help (6) (or alms alone as your food—6). O, Lord! You are all alone" (7).

V

After a while the mental shock disappears and his tension is relieved. Our poet gets into a jocular mood as well. "O, Lord! Sharing your form with the damsel, even *Ganges* is inside your form. There is no other place for the bangle bedecked Lady of the Forest. Therefore, you have enshrined yourself in this Point Calimere of groves" (5). "Why do you reside all alone here, leaving all other places? Is it because you deem it a shame that *Oṟṟiyūr* is a mortgaged city? Have you left away *Tiruvārūr* because the name suggests it is the city of some one else?" (8).

VI

In singing this *hymn*, our poet has reached a divine calmness and bliss which characterize the supreme state of *Śivalōka*. Here

is a development of his mind proceeding from anxiety and grief to laughter and joke and finally to the final, of joy of love. In the ninth verse he states, "My Master, You have enshrined yourself with all love (*aṉpu* is the reading) or bliss (if *iṉpu* is the reading)" (9). Having experienced thus, our poet assures the readers—those who master this *hymn*—that they will be those who reside in the *Śivalōka* of great fame. He refers to the Lord as the Supreme One, being there in the desolate place even there being surrounded by innumerable *Bhūtas* (like him) singing His praises (10).

CHAPTER LXXXIV

TIRUPPŪVAṆAM

(*Hymn* 11)

I

For the first time our poet sings of a temple of the Pāṇḍya country. "Is this *Pūvaṇam,* where resides the Lord"? is the refrain of this *hymn.* The fourth line of every verse ends with the words "*Uṟai Pūvaṇam ītō?*". The poet must have heard about this temple and must have been longing to see this. That is why he exclaims: "Is this *Pūvaṇam?*" After the poet's regret that the Lord is all alone at the Point Calimere, a regret that possibly gives expression to the desolation of that part of the *Cōḻa* country at that time, he breathes in this *hymn* a sigh of relief, that the Lord is here in all glory showering His Grace on all. This *hymn* begins with the statement, "*Tiru uṭaiyār*"—'He is the Lord of wealth of Grace'. The place is not described at length. In the last verse, however, the poet describes the Lord as one who resides at *Tiruppūvaṇam* so glorious for its great fame, as his favourite resort.

II

The same love of the temple expressed in the previous *hymn* with almost childish simplicity inspires this *hymn* and our poet exclaims: "Is this the *Pūvaṇam* where resides the Lord"? The word preceding the ending '*Uṟai Pūvaṇam ītō?*' comes as the first word of the fourth line with the usual emphasis — thanks to assonance, "*Purivuṭaiyār*" — 'He who is blessed with sympathy, mercy or Grace' (1), "*Puṇṇiyaṉār*" — 'the virtuous or the fortunate' (2), "*Puḷḷuvaṉār*" — 'the dupe unto the dupes' (3), "*Poṉṉaṉaiyāṉ*" — 'One who is like gold' (6), "*Neñcam, pukkuṟaivāṉ*" (7, 8, 9) — 'one who resides in the heart'. The other two verses refer to the *Purāṇic* stories of the *Ganges* (4) and the sacred ash (5).

Our poet refers to the Lord as *Tiruvuṭaiyār,* one who is the Lord of beauty, wealth or Grace; *Śaṅkaran,* One who creates bliss, as One who resides at *Tiruppūvaṇam* as His place of desire and love, thus suggesting that the Lord coming down to enshrine

Himself for saving us all. Our poet also refers to the blessing the Lord showers on us (1). The Lord removes the *karma* of those who think of Him as '*Aṇṇal*', The Great One (2).

III

The *purāṇic* descriptions come back to his mind with all their glory. "The formless Lord because of His assuming the forms of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma*, becomes the Lord of the Form. He lovingly has by His side His consort, *Umā*" (1). "The young deer is in His hand; so is the burning battle-axe. There is also the fire in His hand. In the beautiful crown is the water": This verse (4) thus stresses the contrasts to suggest the divine harmony. The *Bhikṣāṭana* form comes to our poet's mind: "He goes a begging to the doors of damsels. He rides on the bull. He shines with the sacred ash in the company of the Mother" (5). His midnight dance with the ghosts also comes to his mind (3). "He is the creator of bliss, He who shares His form with the lightning-like Mother and (yet) He is the gold like one, burning the three cities belonging to those who did not think of Him" (6). The same contrast is further emphasized. "*Rāvaṇa*, thinking too high of his sovereign power and influenced by his wicked nature, tried to uproot *Kailās*. The Lord laughed and pressed a little His toe (and vanquished him)" (7, 8, 9). "But if any one loves Him even for a little while, He enters that unique heart and resides for ever there (7), this Lord removing the *karmas* of those who whilst lying and walking cogitate and think of Him as the Lord" (2). "He is so loving that He removes the *karmas* of those taking refuge in Him" (1). "Yes. He is true to the truthful and a cheat unto those who are cheats" (3).

IV

This *hymn* thus expresses the joy of the poet's arrival at the favourite resort of the Lord in the *Pāṇḍya* country and at the Lord's Grace removing the *karmas* of His followers. We found in this *hymn* that the poet referring again and again to the removal of the *karma* and which implies the removal of all sins. This feeling of holiness inspires our poet to assure those who recite this, the ten garlands of verses in this world that they will cut away their sins even as he has done while singing this *hymn* (10).

CHAPTER LXXXV

TIRUKKŌTTIṬṬAIYUM TIRUKKŌVALŪRUM (TIRUPPARAṄKUṈṞAM)

(*Hymn* 2)

I

This *hymn* is on the lines of *hymn* No. 36 which is admittedly the speeches of the damsels in love with the *Bhikṣāṭana* form. This *hymn* is stated to have been sung by *Ārūrar* expressing the fear at the sight of the Lord, but the poet may be taken to have placed himself in the position of the love-sick maiden. The refrain of the *hymn* is: "We are afraid of serving"—*'Umakku āṭceya añcutumē'*.

II

The frightening objects in the company of the Lord are the proud bull (1), the *Bhūtas* (1), *Pāriṭam* (3), *Pēy* (3) on all sides, His garment of skin of a tiger (3), a lion (7), and His loin cloth (1), His waist cord of a serpent which was made motionless (3), His serpent held in the hand with the hood (4), His ornament of a skull (3), His residence in the burning ghat (2), His sacred ash (2), His ornament of a serpent round the neck and the shoulder (2), His feast of poison (2), His *muyalakaṉ* (3), His putrified skull of a begging bowl (3), His *'erukku'*, *'koṉṟai'* (3) and the crescent moon (4) and the *Ganges* (7) and the ceaseless company of the Mother (4)—(These are to be afraid of by those who wish to embrace Him); His flaying of the elephant (9), His enshrining Himself only on the top of mountains (9), His burning down of *Kāma* (9), His vanquishing of *Rāvaṇa* (10) — (These will frighten only those who are in love with Him and who pine for embracing Him).

"We thought that it was great to have the friendship of the Great; but we cannot embrace you carrying this body of ours. You will not leave off this snake" (2). "You know everything but you know not only this (that these things frighten us, your lovers)" (5): Thus we bemoan day and night. "Whilst we saw you one day under the shade of the banyan tree and we saw you in front of the *Kaṭampūrk Karakkōil* (This probably refers to some incident in his life) — except these we have no other stratagem; you will not leave off your love for the burning ghat" (5). "You said you

are of *Aṇṇāmalai* (the mountain that cannot be reached). You are in *Ārūr* (In whose city are you?)" (6). "You catch hold of the servants who sing of you even whilst being spoken ill of. You accept them but you will not leave them. We do not know your mind. If they are in you (as if you are their eyes) you will not save them from the diseases of their bodies" (7). "You will not relieve them of the chronic *karmas,* inflicting and fettering them as a disease" (8). "You are not capable of giving food and clothes to those who serve" (9). "Your acts are not befitting any one. What is this? We are afraid of serving you" (10).

III

There is another vein. *Arjuna* was frightened at the Universal form of the Absolute which *Kṛṣṇa* showed him. This universal form is also suggested as frightening the devotees. "You go beyond the universe and sit extending beyond that great beyond" (10). "You have become this world, the Heavens, the day (the time), the great mountain of snow, the great expanse of sea, the waters, the fire, the extensive wind, the great expanse of space, the elemental earth. But yet you crushed the ten heads of him who uprooted the mountain to make room for his chariot to run (If you are everything, are you not also this very person?). Your actions do not harmonize with any one. O, Lord, what is this? We are afraid of serving you" (10). This universal vision suggests an esoteric meaning for all *purāṇic* descriptions.

This *hymn* emphasizes the universal aspect of the Lord ruling through and over everything. It breathes a spirit of overlordship over the Universe and a spirit of self-surrender to the Lord. Therefore, the poet assures those followers of Him that those who learn and become experts of this *hymn* of six, four and one, will become slave under the feet of the Supreme Being of *Paraṅkuṉṟam,* becoming at the same time the chief of the eternals, ruling the whole Heaven as its great king (11).

IV

The last verse states that the *hymn* was sung in the presence of the three *Tamiḻ* kings. It is not clear who the kings are. It is usually taken as referring to the *Pāṇḍyas, Cōḻas* and *Cēras.* In this connection, one may refer to *Ñāna Campantar,* praising *Tiṟuppūvaṇam* of the previous *hymn* as being worshipped by *Pāṇḍyas, Cēras* and *Cōḻas.*[1]

1. *Tiruppūvaṇam hymn of Campantar,* 1:64:1, 5.

CHPTER LXXXVI

TIRUKKĒTĪCCARAM

(*Hymn* 80)

I

This *hymn* is on the temple *Tirukkētīccaram* near *Talaimannār* in the *Mannār* Peninsula of Ceylon, to which the Ceylon-boat now sails from *Danuskōṭi* Pier. The town was known during the days of *Ārūrar* as *Māntōṭṭam* on the banks of *Pālāvi,* which today exists as a back-water, still with milk-like white water. It must have been a big tank or *vāpī*. Sand dunes have made the sea recede and the city itself had disappeared under these sweeping sands though slowly revealing its past glory to the shovels of archaeologists.

It was once upon a time a flourishing seaport of Ceylon and *Ārūrar's hymn* bears witness to this fact. He sings, "Ships are ever increasing in number and prosperous in the sea of this port": *"Vaṅkam malikinra kaṭal Mātōṭṭa nannakar"* (5); "The tides are flowing into the *Pālāvi;* the huge waves are thrown out by the flowing *Pālāvi*": *"Pariya tirai eriyā varu Pālāvi"* (4); 'The whole world flourishes here': *"Vaiyam malikinra"* (6). 'It is surrounded by the dark sea' (10). 'It is a sea where abound the white conches' (7). *Pālāvi* is mentioned in nine verses and the last verse speaks of the *'Kaḻi'* or the lagoon and the temple is said to be on its bank.

The city *Mātoṭṭam* is mentioned in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th verses. It is now known as *Māntōṭṭam* or *Māntai,* probably after the *Māntai* on the west coast of the ancient *Cēra* country. In the name given in the *hymn,* however, the nasal *'n'* is absent, perhaps a peculiarity of the Singalese pronunciation — in the *Nāṭṭuttokai hymn* (*H.* 12) of our poet the name appears as *Māntōṭṭam* (7) with the nasal. The descriptions in this *hymn* seem to suggest that it must have received the name because it was a grove and that a mango grove. "It is the good city of the groves where hang the mango fruits"—*"Māvin kani tūṅkum poḻil Matōṭṭa nannakar"* (9). In other verses the beauty of this garden city is clearly brought out. "The bees feast on the honey and

sing in the garden (8). They create the music of the harp — in the gardens on the banks (of *Pālāvi*) — these musicians, with wings beautified by lines (10). It is a city surrounded by a garden of cocoanuts" (5).

Ordinarily these graphic descriptions cannot but be from the pen of one who had actually experienced the beauty and glory of the city. Our poet must have crossed the seas to worship the Lord there. Perhaps he did so when the *Pallava* navy led its expedition into Ceylon. Or, did he sail in the *Pāṇḍya* boat?

The beauty of the garden, the music of the bees, the great expanse of the sea, the grandeur and wealth of this city, the back waters through which the sea flows into the city — all these reflect the greatness, glory, beauty, music and overflowing Grace of the Lord.

II

The temple is the paramount abode of the Lord — His strong-hold for saving us all — '*Tiṭamā uṟaikiṉṟāṉ*' (2): — 'He is there to save us all'. The poet gives his personal testimony; He is One who saves the poet (9). He resides there removing the cruel *karmas* (6) and the diseases of the flesh (7) and its various organs, rushing on to inflict His followers (5). He is the One whose characteristic feature is to cut away the gordian knot of sin and *karma* (9). His servants, the very incarnation of His love worship Him thus (1). So do the eternals, those who are like the very words of the *Vēdāṅgas* — those who could practise what is stated in the Books (3).

He, the Lord, is the Bright One — the light, *Dēvaṉ* (9), the master of the clear *Vēdas* (4). He is the Lord of *Ñāna,* a weapon full of love (1). "*Nattārpuṭai jñānaṉ*" (1) is the very beginning of this *hymn.* Perhaps it means (*Nattu* + *ārpu* + *uṭai* + *jñānaṉ*) that He is the very embodiment of *jñāna* who reaches us full of love (There is another way of reading '*nattār puṭai jñānaṉ*' one who punishes the enemies). He is the beautiful and auspicious bridegroom (1). Beauty and knowledge come with goodness. He is *Ciṭṭaṉ* (8). He is everything in the Universe — the eight categories *viz.,* the five elements, the Sun, the Moon and the soul (8).

III

The *purāṇic* references abound in this *hymn* — His riding on the bull (1), His elephant's skin (1, 2), His ornament of bones

(1), His toilet of ashes (2), His crescent moon (2, 3), His loin cloth (2), His serpent (3, 8), His blotted throat (2, 4), His pendant of a boar's tusk (7), His mat-lock (6), His eye on eyes (4) (horizontally and vertically arranged making thus possible, if one may speak of in modern terminology, the vision of the fourth dimensional continuum) and His triple and double forms (9). His consort is referred to five times (2, 5, 6; 7, 8).

IV

From what has been said, the pattern of the sentence in every verse might have become clear. Every verse ends with the phrase the *"Tirukkētīccarattāṉē* as its last half: 'O, Lord of *Tirukkētīccaram'*; the first half describes the Lord. The last half of the third line ends with the words, *'Pālāviyiṉ karaimēl"* — 'on the bank of *Pālāvi'*. Except in the first two verses (1, 2), the third lines end with the words, *"Mātōṭṭa naṉṉakaril"*, the first halves of these verses being descriptions of the sea or the groves of this city.

V

Our poet is *'Ūraṉ'*, the slave and servant of the Lord but praised by the *Vēdic* scholars. His *hymn* is the defectless *Tamiḻ*. It has been describing the removal of the *karmas*. Therefore, the poet assures those who recite the *hymn* that cruel *karmas* can never touch them (10).

As to the period of the *hymn, Cēkkiḻār* holds that it was sung when the poet visited *Rāmēśvaram* in the *Pāṇḍya* country. If the references to the followers of the Lord being cured of their diseases and *karmas* are based on the personal experience of the poet, this *hymn* may belong to the later period of divine light and peace succeeding the period of the Dark Chamber.

CHAPTER LXXXVII

TIRUCCUḺIYAL

(*Hymn* 82)

I

This is another temple in the *Pāṇḍya* country. This *hymn* describes in the last line of every verse, the efficacy of worshipping the Lord. At least, one verse points out how one can escape from birth (6) and the whole *hymn* may be taken as such an address. The greatness of the temples of the *Pāṇḍya* country, because of our poet almost hankering after them, comes surcharged with emotion. These temples, are so many oases in this desert of life; the Lord has enshrined Himself in these temples to save us, taking them as His favourite resort (5). What a good fortune that in these temples He is happily well established unlike in the desolate places elsewhere! The poet speaks of the place as *Tiruccuḻiyal* in every one of the verses — without omitting the word *'Tiru'*.

II

The swarms of bees sing their tune in their love for the honey of the gardens of this holy place (1), reminding one of the followers of the Lord singing His praises in their great love for the wonderful honey of the place — the Lord. It is the beautiful place where in the ponds, the damsels of soft ruddy lips — red like the *'kōvai'* fruit duck and bathe so much that their pearls drowned during their play in the pond are moved on to the shore by the very motion of the waves they create (3). These pearls are described as those which the roaring sea — *'Kavvaikkaṭal'* — the principal sacred tank of this holy place — brings with cries of fright (3). As the sea is far away from this place this must be taken as a general description of the pearls as being the tribute paid by the sea to the damsels of the *Pāṇḍya* country, the empresses of beauty. The tradition has felt this difficulty about the reference to the sea and the principal sacred tank of this holy place is pointed out as bearing the name *"Kavvaikkaṭal"* the very phrase found in *Ārūrar's* poem. Was the tank known by that name in his age? We know tanks being named *'Sāgaram'*. This

picture of the pearl of the sea also suggests the followers of the Lord revealing to all, the pearl of the Lord as the inner secret of the universe. There is no room for further description of the place in the scheme of this *hymn.*

III

This is His place. He resides there, a place which He had occupied as his favourite resort. It is His city, and He resides there taking it as a great city. He resides there happily established—what a great boon for Him—(*Peṟṟāṉ—pēṟu* is a rare gift received) (5). That way He had come to us, He our relative (5)—our Lord—'*Emperumāṉ*' (4). This seems to emphasize the idea that God is in search of loving souls. This is a new way of looking at the temple cult. It is our worship of self-surrender that He is hankering after. Love knows no restrictions and our poet as the poet of harmony looks upon every kind of worship as good, an expression of love as anything else. He is thought of in various ways and the people of the Lord of Death will never tease those who contemplate on the Lord (1). After this escape from the fear of Death, service comes next to our poet's mind. Those who are experts in performing services—they are all divine services—are indeed the good people who worship only the feet of these *Bhaktas* (3). Hark, these are no slaves; they are those who become the kings of those various parts of the compass; they reside and the Goddess of wealth never deserts them (3).

IV

In passing it may be noted that this accepts regionalism as distinguished from universal sovereignty which our poet spoke of when referring to the *Pallava* king as ruling the world surrounded by the seas (39 : 9). Perhaps the political picture had changed since then. It is said that freed souls are given power over the universe to save the souls and, therefore, power in the service of the Lord is not to be looked down upon. Therefore, our poet is preaching no philosophy of world negation. The followers worship the feet of the Lord and the defects of their mind do not continue. They shine in their glorious fame suggesting thereby their great achievements. The fame is eternal and they rise above into the high Heavens (4).

He is the Lord of the Beautiful Form contemplated on by those who had conquered their five senses (5). This conquest is

not negation but a positive enjoyment of the Beauty, the incarnation of the Absolute. There again, those with an unswerving mind learn the Holy name of the Lord (5). Learning, as *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* puts it, is also acting according to the knowledge gained (*Kuṟaḷ*—391). To know is to do. They reach without fail the ideal or the goal. Therefore, it is our duty to praise the Lord. "O, those who strive to cut away this fetter of birth resting on the *'malam'* or the intrinsic evil blot" (6)—thus our poet addresses the followers of the Lord and points out to them that the worship of the Lord with flowers and unguents will be the best kind of *Tapas.* The third line in this stanza *'Nilam tāṅkiya'* is relied upon as an internal evidence to the version in the *Stala Purāṇa* that *Bhūmi Dēvi* worshipped the Lord in this place with flowers and perfume, giving Him the name *'Bhūminātan'.* The earth bears up these flowers (6). Are not the trees in bloom firmly rooted in this earth? They are there showering the flowers on God; that seems the ideal of their florescence. The whole world goes on thus in this worship of beauty. The rich fragrant smokes curl up as though to go to the Heavens to please the Lord (6). The whole space thus offers as it were a foundation and support for the fame of those who contemplate on this universal worship of beauty and sweetness and who praise the Lord similarly with flowers and unguents (6). *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* speaks of fame as the happy consummation of domestic life and *Tapas* as the consummation of a life of renunciation. Here, this worship of beauty and sweetness making us understand the inner ideal of this universe, leads us not only to great fame but through this fame comes and stands created the great *Tapas* or sacrifice. For, the beauty and sweetness are not used for selfish ends; attachment to them is renounced in the cause of perfection and universal enjoyment. It is a great *Tapas.* This is indeed great wisdom (*catur*) an expert knowledge of the art of life; for, thus one achieves both the contradictory aims of the conflicting ways of life.

These devotees are the divine *Tapasvins.* The Lord worshipped and praised by them is the eternal child or youth (7); old age or decay is not in their fresh thoughts. To those who contemplate on His feet enshrining Truth in their mind, it is indeed easy to be cured of their *karmas* (7).

The humility which is still conscious of its power, ceases to be the humility of self surrender, being carried to the giddy heights of a superior egoism by this self-conscious rulership. These

rulers know not the way of approach. The couchant bull, the *Dharma* of self-surrender is His banner. He is Himself the incarnation of such humility and mercy; for, is He not Himself carrying in His hand the meek and humble deer? He thus stoops to conquer. His feet is on our heads (8).

The same idea of the fall of the arrogant is suggested by the vanquishment of *Rāvaṇa.* The mountain of the creeping waters of cataract is personified as *Tirumalaiyār* (10). (Here we are reminded of the *Vaiṣṇavites'* belief that the freed or free souls have become the various weapons of *Viṣṇu* and the many places in *Vaikuṇṭa*). The great *Dakṣa* never honoured the Lord and the sacrifice came to naught. It ended in His play of destruction. The heretics know not this truth and indulge in their wanton egoism. Alas! That is their fate coming according to the great law of the Heavens (9).

V

(The Heretics referred to are the *Jains* and the *Buddhists.* The *Buddhists* are called the *Cākkiyas* being the followers of the *Buddha* of the *Cākkiya* clan. They probably went about with an umbrella and hence the description *'kuṭai-c cākkiyar'.*—Some have interpreted this as to mean teasing *cākkiyar.* But in that case we must have *'kuṭai cākkiyar'* without the doubling of *'c'*—a reading given by no text. The *Jains* are called *Camaṉ*—perhaps a *Tamilian* form of *Śramaṇa.* This word had come to mean naked; for the *Digambara* Saints of *Tamiḻ* land went without any covering. *'Ātar'* is another description. It is also a name of the *Arhat* according to *Cūḍāmaṇi Nighaṇṭu* — perhaps a form of the word *Āpta,* though there is underlying this a humorous vein laughing at their *'āpta vacana'.* The word also signifies a mean person. *'Ātaṉ'* was such a common name of many persons in the *Caṅkam* age that it had come to mean any ordinary man — man of no worth. "*Kuṇṭāṭiya* — relishing in *kuṇṭu* — is another description of the Heretics. *'Kuṇṭu'* may refer to the well built form of flesh and it may mean the depth of meanness or ignorance or vulgarity. *'Miṇṭāṭiya'* is their revelling in their arrogance in debate and elsewhere. These words *'kuṇṭu'* and *'miṇṭu'* are often used by *Tēvāram* and *Nālāyira Prabhandam* with reference to these heretics derided as vile arrogant and violent — with what justification one cannot say though one cannot quarrel with the poets describing their rivals in the way in which they experienced them).

VI

Leaving this digression at this point, one may continue to see the picture of the devotees. Their ideal (5) (*gati*) is the conquest of death and birth, of fetters, desires and blots, the achievement of fame, and truth, sacrifice, goodness of a blotless heart or mind, happiness derived from power of service, truth and the extinguishment of *karma*. As against the western prejudice accusing the East of indifference to morality, it is seen here that the poet is emphasizing truth and goodness of these followers of God lost in the worship of the Absolute and Beauty. There is one other name '*Śaivatta cevvuruvaṉ*'—'The red or proper form of *Saivite*'—a name which summarizes all the greatness of *Śaivism* (7).

VII

The *purāṇic* stories of *Rāvaṇa* (10), of the banner of Bull (8) and the meek deer in His hand (8) and of the destruction of *Dakṣa's* sacrifice (9) have already been referred to as emphasizing the message of the *Bhakta's* life. His battle axe (2), His club (2), His bull (2), His feast of poison (2), His burning of the three castles of the air (2), His company of the damsel of the mountain (4), His flaying of the elephant's skin (4), His mat-lock with waves of the *Ganges* (4, 6), His crescent moon (5), His sacred ash (7), and His remaining unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8) —all these are also referred to. The description given of the Lord as *standing on the chariot* for the sake of the *Dēvas* at the time of the destruction of the three cities (2) has been probably influenced by the description of *Kṛṣṇa* standing on the chariot for delivering the message of the *Gīta,* suggesting thereby the Lord *Śiva* is equally a great *Guru.*

VIII

The universal vision is hinted at the very beginning itself. He becomes the flesh, the refuge, the soul, the vast expanse of space, and the Heavens showering the rains through the clouds (1). He comes as the intellectual, His decision finding out the way to conquer fate and He comes also as the Fate or Providence (1). The law of our mind or Intellectual decision of human effort and the law of Nature or Fate are thus harmonized as the aspects of the law of the Lord. The Lord is the blotless: He that removes the blot (4). This spirit of holiness breathes through the later *hymns.*

The Lord is glorified as He who has extinguished the five senses, reminding us of the *Kural's* description of God, '*Porivāyil aintavittān*' (6). (It is possible to take this description as applicable to the *Bhakta* as we have already done — 5).

IX

The poet influenced by his description of the followers as kings, calls himself the king of the people of *Nāvalūr* (10). There is a pun in this word and one may call the poet the king as well of the lords of the tongue. But he glorifies himself in all humility as bearing the name of His Lord '*Aṭi peyar — Ārūran*'. This *hymn* breathes the *Bhakta's* spirit of freedom from all miseries, and therefore, the poet assures the readers who know well this *Tamil* garland of Ten verses that they will be also devoid of miseries.

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CHAPTER LXXXVIII

TIRUKKĀṈAPPĒR (ŪR)

(*Hymn* 84)

I

This place had been famous from the times of the *Caṅkam* Age as a fortress conquered from a chieftain *Vēṅkai mārpaṉ* by the ancient *Pāṇḍya* king *Ukkirap peruvaḻuti*. The other name of this place is *Kāḷaiyār Kōil* — the temple of the '*Kāḷai*' or the youth. This form of the Lord as the eternal youth appears before the mind of the Poet; according to *Cēkkiḻār*, our poet has a vision of this form in his dream when the Lord disappears saying that He resides at *Kāṉappēr* (*ūr*). The *hymn* describes this beautiful form and every last line exclaims, "When am I, the servant, to see and worship this youth residing at *Kāṉappēr* surrounded by the fields receiving water from the clouds?" The conception of '*Nāḷaip-pōvār*' of the devotee hankering after going to the temple to worship His beautiful form is a significant development of the Temple cult and pilgrimage. *Tirunāḷaippōvār* had become the name of the saint. This same conception is beautifully brought out by the first *hymn* of *Kulaśēkhara Āḻvār* who is known in Sanskrit tradition as *Āḻvār Nāḷaippōvār*. As *Kulaśēkharar*, according to our view, will be posterior to *Nampi Ārūrar*, his *hymn* has reminiscences of the present *hymn*. Probably *Kulaśēkharar*, the *Cēra* king had some difficulty in going to *Srī Raṅgam*, in the *Cōḻa* territory probably under the *Pallavas*. Our poet, as already pointed out, has been so desirous of visiting the temples in the *Pāṇḍya* country that he expresses this feeling in this *hymn*. It is this hankering, if the use of the word can be pardoned, that is brought out by the exclamations of this *hymn*.

II

"To the great joy and relief of my eyes, when am I to see and worship the devoted servants, worshipping at His feet, His bright and young crescent moon, His company of the damsel, His form like the lotus, His throat shining like the cloud where resides the idea of His feasting on the poison, His eight shoulders and His colourful form of the beautiful and sweet smelling mat-lock"? (1).

It will be seen that the poet is as it were, concentrating and enjoying the sight of every one of the parts of the Lord beginning from His feet and ending with His crown. It will also be seen that our poet suggests that these forms have a significance and an idea behind them; for instance, the idea of love or pity is behind the blue throat. The poet starts describing the Lord as the beloved of the devotees worshipping at His feet.

The other verses similarly refer to the *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord; "His cool mat-lock, with its harmony of the serpents, the crane's feather, the *'mattam'* flower (2) and the crescent moon (3), His lordship over the *Dēvas* (3), His dance in the midst of the forest (3), His great victory over the three castles of the air (4), His *Ardhanārīśvara* form, His shoulders befitting a wrestler (4), His sacred ash (4), His company of the damsel (4), the beauty of His bull (5), His *Tillai* dance (5), His battle-axe (5), the fire in His hand (5), the eye in His forehead (6), His being the forms of *Viṣṇu, Brahma* and *Rudra* (7), His form of *Vēdic* scholar (8), His great form unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8) and His ear wearing the *'makara kuṇṭala'* (9)".

III

What is more important and interesting is his subjective experience of the Lord as His devotee, an experience which is expressed in some places in general (1), as that of all the devotees and in others as special to him. The devotees worship at His feet (1). "They are learned masters of all that speak of His feet and they experience this truth" (2). "They contemplate your greatness and their hearts melt in love. They become one with you and there arises a voice within—the creative impulse trying to give expression to their mystic union" (2). "They sing. They are not different from you; they are but yourself. Realizing this, when am I to become one with them, big with love, to worship you lovingly with grand flowers in my hand so that my miseries (or, the sufferings of my eye in which case he could not have been cured completely of his eye defect) may disappear?" (2).

"He is the great Supreme — Patron, giving me all that is good, even as a thing and a wealth possessed wholly by me. He is *Śiva,* the great significance, vivifying the words pronounced by those who realize Him as the Highest sphere and the Best ideal. He is the sweet nectar — inside the honey, nay, its clear quintessence. He is the full moon in the skies; the blotless light and also the

storm, the water and this earth (sphere); when am I to reach Him as the Great Dancer?" (3).

"The important characteristic features of His are (1) the image form (*bhāvakam*) (4) contemplated by His devotees and servants those who as devoid of all their defects (4), their path (*neṟi*) and their unique musical compositions they recite (*icaip-paricu*). When am I to worship with my heart and praise His holy marks with the help of all that I had studied for fame?" (4). "The devotees stand around Him, playing on the musical drum '*kallavaṭam*' in accompaniment to His dance with which everything in Him and around Him keep time" (5).

"The songs full of the best effects of music and tune — their continuous outpour — the love of the damsels beautiful and bright like the Goddess of Lotus, the great longing of those who wake up exclaiming that He is the first and the greatest Lord who thinks of His devotees only after conferring salvation and freedom on them — these are important marks of His identity. I stand by the side of these, mixed up with them, pining for a way of reaching Him and becoming one with my father and sovereign. He counts even me as of worth and showers His blessing on me so as to save me. When am I to see this Lord of the eye on the forehead (He is indeed the Lord of the eye; for has He not seen the poet) the sweetest fruit?" (6).

But pretensions will never pay. "He does not come near the heart of those of deceitful minds. He is the primaeval, first mould and seed of all. He is the nectar unto those who are attached to truth, without any pretensions and who embrace Him with their whole body (and soul). He is the Great Beyond relishing their five, (*pañcagavya*) beginning with milk, ghee and curd. (Thus we get the details of the ceremony of His worship of our poet's days). When am I to sing of Him as the sovereign protecting me?" (7).

"He is the flame and light, so easy of approach to His servants. He is the rule or order or *dharma*, the meaning and significance of the holy pure *Vēdas*. He is the eternal One escaping even the poison of the seas. He is the Universe. He is its Beginning and its Chief giving out to the Lords of the Universe the *Āgamas* or the Scriptures. He is the greatest mystic wisdom of great fame. When am I to go and reach Him with all love?" (8).

"He is the Lord. He is the great sound evolved out of *Nāda.* He is the life in this body of flesh, in the form of the brightness of the lamp or *jñāna* or wisdom. He is the green corns, which feed the lives. He is Beauty. He never leaves even for a while His attachment to the minds of those great beloved devotees of His. His ideal followers are blotless. He is the envoy and messenger. He is the bosom companion saving me. He is my Lord (who listens with His ears, all my requests). When am I His dog of a slave, to reach Him? (9). He is the sugar candy, the sweet nectar, the youth of *Kāṉappēr*" (10).

IV

The poet has thus brought out the bliss, the power, the universality, the all pervasiveness, the wisdom, the truth and the purity of the Lord and His Grace, He has given us a picture of the devotees and their life and worship. He has taken us into His confidence and shown us his own heart of love. He describes himself as the *Ārūraṉ,* the chief of *Nāval* of shining gardens, praising in the cool *Tamiḻ* in which is enshrined all glory and greatness, the Eternal youth and contemplating on Him with all His heart melting in never forgetting love. His *hymn* expresses the joy of *Bhaktas* and their greatness. Those who will recite these ten verses of music of the peculiar repetitive rhythm will catch this contagion of love. They will also become blessed with the characteristic qualities of these *Bhaktas* — that is the assurance given by our poet. These *Bhaktas* are found in the company of the eternal Lord. Therefore, they will sit in happiness firm for ever, even praised by all the points of the compass. Even if they do not become rulers of the Heaven they are sure to live happily as the heads of *maṇḍalams* (kingdoms). It is curious that the poet is thinking of regional overlordship, once he is in the *Pāṇḍya* country, probably because of the troubles of the period succeeding the demise of *Rājasiṁha* (10).

CHAPTER LXXXIX

TIRUPPUṈAVĀYIL

(*Hymn* 50)

I

This is another temple in the *Pāṇḍya* country, on the sea shore — an ancient city with its gate overlooking an upland jungle tract (*puṉam*). Here again, the poet speaks of desolation and of frightful life. This *hymn* is addressed to the mind advising it to think of the Lord every day, to think of *Puṉavāyil*, the ancient city of the Lord.

Two points are emphasized in this *hymn* about this place: One is the following, that it has become pestered with hunters and jungle (5). The songs of the owls occupying the hollow of the trees do not cease (1); nor does the commotion caused by the courageous hunters fighting with the company of the merchants (2); nor does the noise of the '*uṭukkai*' resounding in the commotion (7). The hunters tease the groups of deer with their sharp arrows of their bows, and the meek animals frightened go and enter their places of hiding (5). It is a place of hillocks of stones, wild bushes, and cruel expanse of space (9), all looking gloomy and colourless amidst those trees on the sea beach. Even the '*kaḷḷi*' gets dried up, the grasses become scorched in the heat and destroy the heated jungle (8). Seeing this, the dotted deer rush to hide themselves in safety (8). The male dove gets to the top of the tall but forked branch of the new born *kaḷḷi* and calls its mate in that golden dry fields of that place (6). In the dark jungle tract of the rocky bushes the black cock roams about for food. It goes and gets up to the top of the ant hill [reminding of the '*kuppaik-kōḻi*' (*Kuṟun.* 305) of the *Caṅkam* poetry], and sends its call of '*kū kū*' (9). In that holy place the boar of sharp tusks in its mouth shining like a torch, and in the place torn by its tusk, the big precious gem comes up and blinks like fire (8). There is not the fright and alarm of the *Kōṭi hymn;* the poet is contemplating on this desolation with a detached romantic poetic outlook.

The other point emphasized by our poet about this place is that these devotees do not cease worshipping the temple even in the midst of all this desolation. The *Bhaktas* in good numbers, sing and dance in that ancient city (1). It is the place where stay *Vāṉavar* or *Dēvas* of the '*marutam*' or city (2). (It is not clear

whether this is a reference to the *Bhūsura* or Brahmins or to the *Bhaktas*). The lovers of His feet enter this place. Their praises do not cease even as the song of the owl and commotion of hunters do not cease (1). It is the place where sing and dance those who have been freed from their fetters (7). The people of all the countries come and bow down before the Lord, day and night (7).

II

Therefore, our poet begs of his mind quarrelling, cursing and swearing at him, to leave off this and to think of the place of the Lord even as these *Bhaktas* do. For, it is His place which He frequents most (5). He is our patron-*Pirāṉ* (3), our Lord — *Emperumāṉ* (4), who has accepted us as His servants (5). He is the good person (5). He is all our relationships and aeons of time (6). We do not want anything more than the death and extinction of the chronic and irremovable *karmas* (9). "This He will effect; for He makes us all alike unto Himself. Does not the crow on reaching the mountain of gold become itself gold? (That is an old tradition) (4). Therefore, this Holy place is our refuge. O, mind of cogitation think of Him; contemplate on Him; consider the pros and cons and weigh all the groups of facts (*tokku — āya; āya* means *āyka* (3). Be firm; this is our refuge. Pray stand (without vascillation — 5). Pray do not forget (6). Think of Him with a great longing (or freed from your faults) (7). In whatever way, pray only think of Him" (2). (*Eṟṟu* (9) may also be taken as an exclamation of pity or wonder).

III

The *purāṇic* descriptions also come in as intensifying this desolation — the Lord's covering of an elephant's skin (1), His riding on the bull (2), His ash besmeared form (10), His waistcord of the serpent (3) and His great naked or smiling form (*nakkāṉ*—3), (perhaps on the chariot whilst burning to ashes the three cities).

IV

Our poet describes himself as *Ūraṉ* of *Nāval,* the slave of the servants of the Lord — an emphasis once again on the cult of *Bhaktas.* In this *hymn* the poet has been describing the joyous song and dance of the *Bhaktas* freed from *karmas,* even in this desolation becoming like unto God. Those who can study this *hymn* without any laziness and praise the Lord, will get their *karmas* extinguished and become the citizens of the city of God, singing and dancing; they will become pure and perfect without any defect whatever — that is the assurance given by our poet (10).

CHAPTER XC

TIRUVĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 8)

I

This *hymn* is on *Tiruvārūr* and according to *Cēkkiḻār* this was sung when our poet returned to his residence in this city along with *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ*. Every one of the verses in this *hymn* ends with the words: *"Ārūrappaṉē añciṉēṉē"* — 'O, father of *Ārūr*, I am afraid of you'. The previous lines explain the ephemeral life in this nauseating and revolting body of flesh where everything turns out to be a delusion and it is this which inspires the fright in him. This feeling of fright cropped up in the *Tirukkaṟkuṭi hymn* (*H.* 27) where he begged of the Lord to assure him with the words 'Don't fear'. The condemnation of the ephemeral life is found also in *Tiruppuṟampayam hymn* (*H.* 35). Therefore, one would have expected this *hymn* to form part of those cycle of *hymns*. That is one reason we suggested all these *hymns* belonging to this last period of *Ārūrar's* life to the period succeeding the death of *Rājasiṁha*.

II

"Taking hold of this covering, looking like the torn drum I saw through. I considered the happiness born of the company of sovereigns and the life harmonizing with such happiness. (As a result of this) I am frightened" (1). "This is a heap of flesh and blood, an illusion without any significance. Young damsels of fawn-like eyes alone consider this human birth as of any worth. I do not want this life" (2).

"The 96 elements of this body look like a thicket uprooted. Those who after consideration describe these, do not speak with one voice (or do not speak of it as anything of worth)" — (Sixty plus ten, reaching six plus five into four make up Ninety-six. *'Eṭṭum'* has to be taken as a relative participle rather than as a number) (3).

"If we begin to describe (the defects) there is no end or limit. It is a foolish life of no taste. I had not known any good entering this (so called) good roof (of a body)" (4).

"This is a hut made of nerves and bones tied together not at all befitting all our ambitions and desires. Residing therein, I cannot lead the life of gentle folk" (5).

"Children, mother, father and relatives are happy at marriage. All this is transformed and they themselves exclaim, 'it is corpse' and burn it away to ashes. I am a dog but I do not want this birth" (6).

"The servants leave off the characteristic humility of theirs. They treasure in their minds the idea of wealth. They think only of living (sometimes) this life. They cannot give anything for the sake of their next birth. When they fall into the deep pit, in the midst of all their sufferings, they become a prey to one person alone (probably the Lord of Death)" (7).

"This (body) was constructed out of the heap of flesh and the water of blood, this is a cave of '*mala*' or blots or evil things. It is a never ending illusion of a roof and a hut. I do not want this life within this body" (8).

"It is an illusory covering, all false. It is indeed a magic that this should be a thing thought of as something real and true. I do not want this life of magic nor can I aspire for it" (9).

III

The poet almost starts with the condemnation of royal life and this reminds us of his erstwhile political preoccupation. His description of the Lord by the *Dēvas* crowding together to worship Him with the tributes of gold and gems thrown at His feet (1) is couched in the terminology befitting a royal life.

IV

There are not many *purāṇic* descriptions referred to in this *hymn*. The poet speaks of the white bull (2), the infructuous quest of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (8) and the throat wherein saunters along, the poison (10). Our poet also speaks of our Lord playing on the *yāḻ* (7).

V

The poet refers to the *Bhaktas* and their worship. The worship by the *Dēvas* with the offerings of gold and gems has already been referred to. There are those who daily worship the Lord with sweet smelling flowers and water and on them our father of *Ārūr* confers knowledge or wisdom (3). The Lord Himself is the precious pearl and His *Bhaktas* worship Him daily with their crown and to them He becomes of that characteristic feature (9). It is not clear what this phrase means. It may mean, He becomes whatever they think of, *i.e.,* in whatever form one worships Him that particular form the Lord takes.

VI

He describes himself as *Ūraṉ* and speaks of this *hymn* as a song which he had sung so lovingly with good words though inspired by fear. Those who are capable of contemplating on the meaning of this *hymn* and recite it will approach our Lord and their words will yield the fruits of Grace. Even in the midst of his feeling of fear the poet is conscious of the divine presence; for this fear itself is kindled in one's mind, when thought of God's holiness and reality stands in contrast to this delusion of a putrifying flesh (10).

VII

The holy place itself is described as befitting the worship of the *Bhaktas,* full of flowers and people of good words. The damsels of heaving bosoms (10), and beautiful words (10) reside in that city. The group of '*mātavi*' creepers round the '*puṉṉai*' tree giving out its fragrance to our heart's content is ever in bloom, on its buds blossoming into flowers (5). All round the palaces, in all the long-drawn passages, the jasmine crowds and in the night the bees move about (guided by its fragrance) (4). It is a place of green groves full of gardens in the midst of cultivated fields, a proper resort of *Bhaktas* and here the Lord confers on them their rest and communion (6).

CHAPTER XCI

TIRUVAIYĀRU

(*Hymn* 77)

I

This *hymn* on *Tiruvaiyāṟu,* according to *Cēkkiḻār,* was composed by our poet whilst going to the *Cēra* capital along with the king *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ,* a story which we discussed elsewhere. The *Kāviri* was in floods at the time of our poet reaching its bank. "The stream swallows so quickly, without anybody knowing it, the arecanut fruits probably falling down over-ripe. (At this) under the green shade of the cocoanut palm, full of bunches of fruits, the sugar-cane crusher raises as it were a hue and cry. Thus roll the waves of *Kāviri* on whose bank stands *Aiyāṟu*" (1) and God is addressed as the Lord of *Aiyāṟu* on the bank of *Kāviri* in every one of the verses of this *hymn.*

"The flood gathers together (*paruvi-arittu*) the seeds and on its course it throws and scatters (*vicci*) them to grow on the mountain slopes. It takes hold of the barks of trees to play its pranks with the elephants. The maids of the mountains keep watch over their fields preventing the birds from coming in and driving out the parrots. The flood rushes carrying away the garlands of their tresses of hair. Rushing fast *Kāviri* becomes noisy" (3). "The beautiful waves of *Kāviri* in floods bring the plantain and the cocoanut palm full of fruits and throw them on to the banks; thus the waves are full of beauty" (4). "The river comes down (to the plains) so that the good damsels of cool eyes may bathe and play. It overflows unable to be kept within the mountain and the neighbouring lands. It mixes itself with the honey of the bamboos. It flows into the fields, the waves of the *Kāviri* getting up through the channels and proclaiming as it were its gift (to the needy)" (5). "The long drawn streams coming in great numbers gather the gems, the pearls and gold so much that the waves respond with the noise" (6, 7). "The *Kāviri* with its waters, deepens down so that those, who worship you and thereby desire to be rid of all their miseries, may bring it with all their hearts, wherever they stay and bathe you in the *Kāviri* waters" (8). "The clouds tremble (with their lightning)

and the rain is poured out. The flood spreads; the foam is scattered. The *Kāviri* roars with its waves" (9). "Everywhere the people of the country bathe with a clear vision in the waters of the *Kāviri* when this settles down. It is for this, the stream of the *Kāviri* is so full of the waves of fragrance, waves that play" (10).

The last few descriptions make it clear that the *Kāviri* is described not only when it is in full floods but also when it is crystal clear enabling the devotees to bathe.

II

Our poet refers to the *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord: His mat-lock of hidden *Ganges* (2), the deer and the battle-axe (in His hand) (2), the hood of the cruel serpent encircling His waist (4), His *koṉṟai* (6, 8), His bull (6), His begging in the company of the damsel of the mountain (7), His crescent moon (8), His being a flame of light surrounded by the serpents (8) and His remaining unknown to *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* (10). The poet here identifies the king of the country with the *Tirumāl* or *Viṣṇu* —(*Tēcavēntaṉ—Tirumāl—Viṣṇu*) (10) thus proving that the divine right theory of kings had taken final form and shape by the time of *Nampi Ārūrar.*

III

Our poet describes the Lord as the past and the future '*Muṉ nī, piṉ nī*' (6); the basis and the first cause (or the chief)— '*Mutalvaṉ*' (6). The holiness of God is also emphasized. He is *Tīrttaṉ* (7)—the Lord of holy path or holy waters; He is *Puṇṇiyaṉ* (8), the virtuous, He is *Jyōti,* the light of flame—*Cuṭarccōti* (8). The Lord is as is often the case with *Nampi Ārūrar* spoken of as "*Emmāṉ tammāṉ tammāṉē*" (9)—the father of the father of my father.

IV

The rest of the *hymn* reveals two different lines of thoughts; one, emphasizing the Grace of the Lord and our poet's unworthiness; the other, emphasizing our poet's innoncence and the Lord's indifference to the *Bhaktas.* There is thus a conflict of emotions. "I do not know any way of worshipping you; nor did I in my early days attune my mind to worship you; though thinking of you day and night, I cannot think of attaining you" (1). "Wherever I may go, you come and become enshrined in my mind. Without any doubt whatever, you remain ever loving, without any difference between the first day or the last day of our

intimacy" (2). "Having come together, I cannot bear any separation from you. I have given myself completely to you, standing firmly in your path. I cannot leave it off" (3). "Those, who have become habituated to your service, who have become servants without slighting you, what gain they had, I know not" (4). "I do not know any mistakes committed by me. Pray, order that the mistakes if any may be erased" (5). "I have not seen or realized you, perhaps I have seen you as somewhat like the irradiating or pinching hunger. I cannot swim against the current" (9). "Though Your servants feel shy to approach you and keep quiet, You have no good in you, nor is there any sign in you of understanding their thoughts" (10). "Though devotees gather together you keep mum because you have not any good quality; nor do you understand their thoughts. Though I continue to be in a sulky mood I am not in a position to realize you, I, your servant, *Ūraṉ*. I have searched everywhere but cannot see or realize you; I think only of *Tiruvārūr*" (11).

Apart from the conflict of emotions, the construction of the sentences is also confusing. We have probably to take the conjunctive participles lying in the verses almost unconnected, as going with the verb implied in the word *'uṭaiya'* of the phrase, "*Aiyāṟuṭaiya Aṭikaḷō*" (1-11).

The Absolute is so rich in its varied aspects that what appears to be conflicts are resolved in its beauty of variety. The assertion that, "I am thinking only of *Tiruvārūr*" (11) suggests that this also must belong to the cycle of *hymns* hankering after *Tiruvārūr* like *hymns* No. 83, 51.

V

It is remarkable that our poet does not refer to any good effect flowing from a recitation of this hymn. The specific effect of recitation is not mentioned probably because mere recitation as giving vent to pent up fellings is itself a great boon. "*Aiyāṟuṭaiya Aṭikaḷō!*"—'Is it the Lord of *Aiyāṟu!*' may be an exclamation of wonder and joy as much as the exclamation, "*Pūvaṇamītō*!" (*H.* 11)—"Is it *Pūvaṇam*!" expressing the pent up desire for seeing the place a desire now being fulfilled. It is probably because of this that *Cēkkiḻār* is bringing together all these *hymns*. Our poet must then be visiting these places for the first time; there must have been some difficulty in his visiting this place, perhaps due to the war of succession to the *Pallava* throne.

CHAPTER XCII

"MUṬIPPATU GANGAI"—TIRUVAÑCAIKKAḶAM

(*Hymn* 44)

I

This *hymn* according to tradition is on the temple in the *Cēra* capital, *Tiru Añcaikkaḷam,* probably the ancient *Vañci* or *Karūr.* But the *hymn* itself does not mention any specific place. The Lord is described as '*Empiraṉ*' in all the verses of this *hymn.* Does it refer to the *Cēra* Country calling their princes '*Tampirāṉ*' and princesses '*Tampirāṭṭi*' ? This may be taken as one of the *Bhikṣāṭana hymns* or a *hymn* sung by our poet with the same feeling of love, reverence, fear and humour of those damsels who had the vision of the *Bhikṣāṭana.* Five verses end with the word, "Is there nothing else but snakes, bull, *etc.* for our Lord ?" (1, 2, 6, 8, 9)—these end with the word "*Empirāṉukkē*'. These express the humour, fear and love—a curious combination of emotions. Five verses end with the word '*Empirāṉ*' (3, 4, 5, 10), two of which beg of the devotees not to speak harsh of the Lord (3) and not to speak of deserting the Lord (4); one speaks slightingly of the world which in spite of the Lord showering His Grace, condemns Him as mad (5) and the other requests the servants to speak about the Lord (10). Perhaps all the other verses also express this regret that the Lord is not receiving His deserts. Or, is it that the political failures had dashed the hopes of others to whom our poet suggests they should not speak of forsaking the Lord.

II

"His crown is the *Ganges* and the moon. What He destroyed are the three castles reduced to ashes in a second. Ah! I am afraid that the poison of His serpents will spread to the brain as soon as it bites. What beautiful hands of His! Is there nothing else to be held in these hands?" (1). "Is there no other dance hall but this jungle of bushes; no toilet except this ash of the burning ghat? Has He no share other than this share of the form of the damsel of the *Himalayas?* Has He nothing else to ride on, except this petty bull?" (2).

This feeling of fright and love slowly gives place to a feeling of regret that the Lord in spite of His coming begging for our love, for our benefit continues to go about as a beggar without His love being returned—He who is the Lord of the *Dēvas* of great power. But all the same there is a sly humour in this kind of speech which amounts to decrying the Lord.

"The Lord begs of you often and often to prevent and remove hesitations and confusions of your mind and to challenge the slaughter of the lives of this great earth (Has our poet like the Great Asōka become sick of the slaughter of war—the war of succession to the *Pallava* throne?). He is the learned of the exemplary conduct—the *Dēva* of *Dēvas,* the light of lights, with great powers of destruction over evil, reducing to ashes the three cities" (3).

"He is our wealth adorning His mat-lock with a garland of grinning skulls, in the unapproachable dark graveyard surrounded by ghosts of fiery tufts of hair in the midnights whilst the fox steals away the dead head with its mouth and the wolves shriek (What penance and beggary for our sake! What meanness by the way!). O, devotees! Pray do not speak of deserting Him, our Lord" (4).

"There is no illusion about Him. He has become the Lord of the mountainous country (*Cēra* country is known as the country of mountains—the Lord becomes one of the residents of the place to save others). That is His greatness. People praise Him according to their capacity and the Lord cuts them away from their miseries. And yet, alas! He is spoken of as a mad man and as a wandering ghost" (5).

"The celestials and the eternals praise our Lord as their all pervasive sovereign. They come together concentrating their minds in their path (of Love). They worship His couple of feet with flowers of purity. But has not our Lord anything else to sing other than the secret chant (*Vēdas*). Has He nothing else to crown Himself with, except this crescent moon?" (6).

"His garland is but of *koṉṟai, kūviḷam,* and unique *mattam.* His beginning and end are what no one has fathomed. He has no city of His own. But yet it is said He has thousand names, to be worshipped by those who love Him, in all the worlds" (7).

"Great souls even when they had reached the state of greatness of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma,* find it impossible to know Him. But

He adorns His mat-lock with only the serpent, the *vanni* leaves, the moon and the *mattam*. He is our Lord of purity (*Punitan*). Has he, our Lord, nothing but fire for His hand?" (8).

"Alas, is this to be His characteristic feature—to feast on the consuming fire of scandals of the eagles revelling on their food or ghee—those heretics, *Jains*, of dark mind. Has He nothing but this elephant's skin frightening the large heart of the Damsel of the *Himālayas?*" (9).

III

Though all kinds of emotions struggle to find expression in this *hymn*, the poet himself assures us it is only humour that is the basic emotion. He calls this *hymn*, a *hymn* making fun of the Lord, the gem of the angry bull and blotted throat and that is why we characterized it as a *Bhikṣāṭana hymn*. Our poet calls himself *Ūran*, the slave of the Lord, and the father of *Vanappakai* of great fame praised by willing tongues (10).

(*Vanappaikai* like her paternal grand mother is called *Jñāni*).

Our poet does not give any specific result of reciting this *hymn* but calls upon the devotees to recite it. That itself, our poet feels, is a great joy.

CHAPTER XCIII

TIRUVĀRŪR

(*Hymn* 59)

I

This *hymn* is on *Tiruvārūr* sung according to *Cēkkiḻār* when the poet's thoughts went to *Tiruvārūr* whilst he was at the court of the *Cēra* king. *Cēkkiḻār* feels that because of *Tiru Murukaṉ Pūṇḍi* incident of the poet being robbed of by the hunters, a robbery, which could not have occurred if the poet was in the company of the *Cēra* king, the poet must have returned when he was robbed on the way. The last place sung by our poet is admittedly *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* and, therefore, the poet must return to that place. In the *Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam hymn,* the poet speaks of the presence of the three kings usually taken as the *Cōḻa,* the *Pāṇḍya* and the *Cēra* kings. If that were so, *Cēkkiḻār* assumes (1) that the *Cēra* took the poet to his capital for honouring the saint, (2) that on our poet thinking of *Tiruvārūr,* he returned to *Tiruvārūr* when he was robbed on the way and (3) that the saint once again went to *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* being drawn there by the loving memories of his previous visit.

If we are not so very much tied to tradition, we are free to assign the *hymn* on *Tiruvārūr* to the previous cycle of *hymns* expressing his longing to go back to *Tiruvārūr* which probably he had to leave because of political complications. He goes to the north on a pilgrimage to come and settle down at *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr.* He later on returns to *Tiruvārūr* from where he is in a position to visit the *Pāṇḍya* and the *Cēra* country including *Pāṇṭikkoṭu-muṭi.* Perhaps the political party of His is not successful. He goes through places laid desolate. The *Cēra* need not necessarily have accompanied him. The poet goes to the *Cēra* capital where he resigns himself to his fate. His end comes there and according to the tradition, also the end of the *Cēra,* his political ally, perhaps against *Nandivarma.* If this conclusion is correct this *hymn* belongs to the cycle of *hymns* 51 and 83; or, the poet might have sung at *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* without going back.

II

"The Lord got wild and kicked the Lord of Death (2). He is the Lord of the eight forms (2). He rides on the bull worshipped by the celestials and the eternals, as their pearl (or the ever free One) and their patron (4). He holds up in His hand the skin of the elephant which He had flayed (7). He has an eye above the eyes (7). It is High right of divinity to be crowned with the crescent moon (7). The *Ganges* is in His mat-lock (9). *Umā* is on one part of His form (9). He is the unruly mischievous theif (10) (of our hearts). He is the scholar (*Bhaṭṭa*) (10), the father of the *ceṭṭi* who out of love hewed down *Sūrapanma* in the sea (10). He stands crowned with the laurel of *koṉṟai* (11). He can never forget *Tiruvārūr* because of the beautiful damsel—*Paravai* (11):"—These are all the *purāṇic* allusions in the *hymn*.

III

The *hymn* expresses our poet's feeling of gratitude. "He is the One that gives gold and the true reality (of His own Absolute). What more, it is He who brings about their enjoyment and experience—the enjoyment of the world and His Grace or the wealth of salvation. He does not stop with that. He puts up with my excesses. He orders the removal of all faults. He is my father impossible to be known specifically. He is the munificent patron so easy of reach. Is it proper or possible to forget this Lord of *Ārūr?*" (1). "He is the One who weeds out our sufferings and fetters of disease. He weeds out the cruel diseases and filthy desires (or desires left off by great minds). It may mean that He weeds out the cruel diseases resulting from desires though the desires have now ceased). It is impossible to leave such a one if you had once been in communion with Him. He orders the prevention of the affliction of the past and future scandals (This again seems to suggest some political complication)" (2).

IV

From these personal experiences, he rises to the universal state of seeing God everywhere. "He showers as rain on the cloud-clad mountains. He is the significance of all arts and yet becomes one with the soul enjoying the arts, at the same time feeling sympathy for it. He stands as day and night—(as the time frame of art). He is the organs of senses—(the instruments

of enjoyment). He is the ear that listens through, the sound to its significance and joy; He is the tongue experiencing the taste. He is the eye that sees, (He is the objects creating the impressions in artists' mind which gives expression to them as art). He is the roaring sea and the mountain" (3).

"He is the greatest. He weeds out our pains. He is the *Vēdas*. He is the light for all the living beings of this world, though He is impossible to approach to those who do not think of Him with loving contemplation. He is so easy of reach to me, His slave" (7). "He is the flower of my crown; He, after accepting me as His servant under a promise to save, has gone away and hidden Himself. He is the day-light and darkness. He is the honey, springing up in the minds of those contemplating on Him; He is the sugar candy, the strained juice of sugar cane" (10). "He is the basis of all, fit to be described as the one great city for all the people of the world. He is the real category, the Absolute in communion with everything" (11).

V

This greatness of God's love intensifies his feeling of his unworthiness. He cries, "I nourish and increase my flesh alone. I cannot cross the miseries—inflicting me as a result of the hankerings of many days. Nor, do I see a way out. Alas! I cannot (out of pity) throw anything into the hands of those who beg with sunken eyes" (9). This self-condemnation is more for the sake of others, in whose position he places himself and weeps thus bitterly for all. He speaks of these indifferent people. "God's followers worship Him losing themselves in Him and doing nothing of their own but standing in His presence. (Such is their self-surrender). These get the rulership of the Heavens. (Is there any reference to the death of *Rājasiṁha?*) To the ears of the people of this world this news reaches. And yet they do not worship Him every day with flowers. Nor do they realize the truth of his saving us. Having heard this, I labour hard to the point of prostration. Thinking that He will be the help and prop to all our relations (the human community) I call upon many of them to become His servants" (8).

VI

He reasons out on the basis of the ephemeral nature of this world and appeals to our reason:

"People die. In the presence of their corpse, some congregate and laugh at the life of the dead. Before that happens to us, should we not escape this calamity? Have we not for helping us, therefore our faculties of '*cintai*' (*cittam*=recollections), '*manam*' (desire to know) and '*mati*' (decision) already established in us (and not only *ahaṅkāram* or ego)? Have we not the results of fate to help us? If there is *yōgic* attachment to Him, if there is clarity of mind, if there is firmness coming out of faith and certainty, if there is such a thing a returning from old ways (and therefore hope of conversion), if there is next birth (when one is sure to get his divine desires fulfilled if not in this birth), if there is that deceit (of nature) leading its invasion on our life (therefore, egging us on to activity before death comes) can one forget the father of *Ārūr*, for, we are blessed with knowledge (to open our eyes) and there is life yet in our body (to be saved)?" (4).

"The five senses gradually make me view this body of holes as the reality of worth and significance and as wealth, relations and enjoyment and He, the Providence or Law, prevents all their activities occurring in me. He is the munificent patron (*Vaḷḷal*). Ever, day after day, the eternals worship and praise Him as their sole help and prop" (6).

VII

Our poet is proud of his name *Ārūrar*, the beautiful name of the father; but he is humble enough to praise himself as His servant the slave of a dog. He is however sure that those who become experts of the message of his, will be residents of the eternal world—for, that has been his experience whilst singing this *hymn* (11).

CHAPTER XCIV

TIRUMURUKAṈPŪṆṬI

(*Hymn* 49)

I

This is a place in the *Koṅku Nāṭu,* sung by *Ārūraṟ* alone. There are many villages with the name *Pūṇṭi.* This term as referring to a village is as old as *Ārūrar* and *Piṅkala Nikaṇṭu. Pūṇṭi* is probably from the root *'pūṇ'* meaning a group of houses or people undertaking to live together or yoking themselves to a social life. The *Pūṇṭi* is called after *Murukaṉ,* the *Tamiḻ* God, or a chieftain of that name. According to the *Sthala Purāṇa,* the place derives its name from the fact that *Murukaṉ* worshipped *Śiva* at this place.

II

This is another desolate place, laid as such · by the poor marauders of *Vaṭuku* hunters. These *Vaṭukars* were probably the ancestors of the *Badagas* of Nilgiris and thus *Vaṭuku* was probably the *Kannada* language. By their very speech they express their unsocial nature. (Is this a reference to their foreign language or is it that their speech is unsocial, as breathing hatred?) They speak very harsh (1). They look like monkeys (3). Their peculiar chin is characteristic of their savagery (*Mōṟai vēṭuvar*-4). There is about them an awful offensive odour of rancid flesh (1). (*Muṭuku*—if the formative *'ku'* is omitted, we get the root *'muṭu'* a root found in *'muṭai', i.e.,* odour of flesh *etc.;* and in *'muṭuval',* the dog). The hair of their head is tied round like those of women—*'cūṟaippaṅki—i.e., paṉiccai* (4). (Or, it may mean they share the booty). These poor beings wear but rag and on that is fastened a small sword (4). They carry a curved but cruel bow and they frighten the wayfarers with it (1). They waylay and dash fast which our poet tries to express with the onomatopoetic phrase (*Tiṭuku moṭṭu*); (1) they box the poor people on the way and they throw stones at them (2). They have their own musical and battle drums; the sound of their *'mōntai'* or pot drum never ceases (9). These devils live on killing cow and

eating its flesh (3). They have no conception of sin; they undertake every day the slaughter of many lives (3).

The *Pūṇṭi* is the place of their highway robbery; the robbery is there, a daily event. But these wretches in torn clothes are only after clothes to cover their nakedness; they have been reduced to that level of poverty and savagery of bestial life. Therefore, they strip the wayfarers naked. This emphasis on their robbery of clothes heightens the desolation of the place. Our poet has given us a pen picture of their life and appearance. There is another beauty about this description in that the poet is trying to give it a local colour by using the dialectic words of the place and the people — '*Icukku*' (3)', '*Tiṭukumoṭṭu*' (1), '*Ucirkkolai*' (3); perhaps also '*cūṟai*' (4), '*mōṟai*' (4) and '*mōntai*' (9). The story of the robbery of all gold presented to *Ārūrar* by the *Cēra* is apparently based on this description of '*Kūṟai koḷḷumiṭam*'.

III

Even this rendezvous of these hunters is not without natural attractions to our poet. The pollen dusts of the jasmine cast all round this place, their sweet fragrance (2); the buds bloom and the sweet smell spreads (6). Is it desolation? No! For, our poet feels that invisible eternals worship there before every one—a secluded place, a quiet resort, for the happy couple of the damsel and of the Lord (10). But this is an idea which comes last. At the first flush, it is the desolation—horrid desolation that comes to his mind. "What a place for the Lord to live with His consort the embodiment of His Grace!" and the poet exclaims, "What for are you here my prince, and patron?" (1). "If it is not your duty to safeguard the suburban areas why are you here, My Lord?" (2). "You have the bull to ride upon. You are not lame. You have not been disabled by any pain or suffering" (8). "You are proud and capable enough to move about" (5). "You are riding on the bull; why then are you here?" (8). "What is the reason? What are you guarding over?" (7). "You are fond of the *Uttira* festival of *Oṟṟiyūr* of the tidal ocean (*Uttiram* is one reading; '*Utti*' is another) (7). "Why are you here? You receive alms to go down in this meanness of beggary" (6). '*Icukku*' is '*Iḻukku*', the fault or meanness. '*Ici*' probably as a corruption of '*Iḻu*' in the sense of break is found in *Tivākaram*. '*Icitta*' is found in *Aruṇagirinātar*. Probably the poet is using the dialect of

the *Vaṭukar*. *'Payikkam'* is begging (See: *Pāḻūril payikkam pukkuyntavārē*: Appar: 4 : 5 : 8). "If you live on the alms given, why permanently stay here?" (3).

IV

This begging brings to our mind the *Bhikṣāṭana* form and one may not be far wrong in calling this *hymn* also as a *Bhikṣāṭana hymn*—a recurring motif in *Ārūrar's* art. This beggar of love curiously enough as we had seen, comes with His loving consort. Our poet sings here, "You come as a beggar but you are dazed and you do not know any way of living on the alms offered in the cities" (5). We saw the poet emphasizing latterly the holiness and purity of the Lord. In keeping with this trend the poet harps on the white aspect of His ornaments. "He recites the holy *Vēdas;* He besmears Himself with the white ash wearing a white loin cloth" (7). "He carries as a begging bowl of a white skull; His laurel is the white crescent moon" (9). "The skin he wears is shining. He is a beggar but He is one who creates happiness or bliss. He is a great musician. He sings the musical *Sāma Vēda*" (5). "He is fond of the musical instruments and their intermittent sound—*kokkarai, koṭukoṭṭi, tattaḷakam, kuṭamuḻā, tuntumi* which are struck in accompaniment to the song; all accompaniments to the dance of the Beggar" (6).

V

These are the verses which the poet has spoken out of his heart—a *hymn* springing as it were out of his contemplation. This *hymn* whilst reciting inspires us with a calm joy where disappear all miseries, kindling in us a contemplation of the love of the Lord, coming a-begging for our love. This same experience is vouchsafed to those who recite the praise of the Lord. Our poet calls himself *Ūraṉ*, the *Śiva Toṇṭaṉ*. Another reading is *'Ciṟu Toṇṭaṉ'* or the humbler servant (a meaning which we noted in *Campantar's words*: 3 : 63 : 1-11).

CHAPTER XCV

TIRUPPUKKOḶIYŪR AVINĀCI

(*Hymn* 92)

I

This *hymn* is on the temple at the place called *Tiruppukkoḷi*. The Lord of the Temple is *Avināci, i.e.,* one who knows no destruction. Now the place itself goes by the name of *Avināci*. But in the *hymn*, it occurs as the name of the Lord, as a noun put in apposition with the other names describing the Lord. Every third line of the verses ends with the words, *'Pukkoḷiyūr Avināciyē'* except in verses 2 and 9 which speak of *'Pukkoḷiyūriṟ kuḷattiṭai'* (2 & 9), referring to some *Brahmachari* or youngster getting into the tank and bathing and playing a prank or deceiving the poet. The story about the boy dead long ago coming alive from the mouth of a crocodile had been discussed earlier (in the life of *Cuntarar-Ārūrar*).

II

The place is described as being full of gardens which dance in the woods (4), as it were for the Temple—a garden where play the monkeys (7) and where the birds get to the top of the trees (9). Our poet is so overpowered by his feeling of universal love that he speaks of the she-monkey going in search of edible fruits for its beloved and also worshipping the Lord in the mountain slopes at the time of every *sandhi* (morning, midday and evening) with the offerings of water and flower and the Lord residing in its heart (7)—a beautiful picture of domestic life and *tapas* rolled into one, something contemplated in *Naṟṟiṇai* (v. 22).

If Kālidāsa's Sākuntala speaks of the creepers as sisters, our poet speaks of even the she-monkey as a spiritual colleague like him performing the duties of domestic life and *tapas* (7). This worship of the monkey, and that of a she-monkey, takes, in the seventh verse, the place of worship by the celestials in the previous verse (6). "The tongue will not utter anything except singing of you" (6). So saying, the *Dēvas* or celestials worship and salute as the Lord's servants. For, He becomes the crown

of those who contemplate on Him; for He is so fond of their praises (6).

III

The Lord is the beautiful light of the *Dēvas—cuntaraccōti*—6. Our poet thus emphasizes the beauty aspect and the *jñāna* aspect of the Absolute. He is the great gem—'*Māmaṇi*' (2). He is *Pacupati* (1)—the Lord of the souls, a name which expresses the unique philosophy of the *Śaivites*. He is *Paramēṭṭi* (1)—the Supreme. He is *Nandi* (7), a name which is sacred to the later day *Śaivites,* though it is also a name of *Arhats* in ancient times especially of *Ṛṣaba Dēva*. He is our Man and Prince (3). He is our Chief (1). He is the *Alpha* and *Omega* (4). He is the blotless and the Pure: '*Niṉmala mūrti*' (10). He is the great Dancer (6).

IV

The *purāṇic* references here are not many as is the case with our poet's *hymns* in which the subjective element predominates. But the serpent is spoken of often and often (1, 3, 4 & 8). The blotted throat (10), the destruction of the three cities (5) and the mat-lock of flowers (6) which mat-lock rises mercifully (*arulōṅku*) higher and higher with the increasing waters of the *Ganges* (10), His dance hall of graveyard (5), His fighting bull (10), His preferring the garment of tiger's skin to white clothes (9)—are all mentioned. The temple cult is also emphasized. He resides at *Naḷḷāṟu, Teḷḷāṟu* and *Aratturai* (9).

V

One may turn to the personal representations of the poet to the Lord. The *Ārūr hymn* exclaimed, "Is it possible to forget the father of *Ārūr*? (*H.* 59). Here our poet begins in the same strain, "Because of what, will I forget my Lord even in the seven fold births? With all my heart I think of you alone as my relative, realize that truth. I live attached to you" (1). "Wherever I may go, if I just think of my Lord no evil befalls me (3); even if I enter the *Koṅku* country there is none to waylay me and rob me of my clothes" (3). (This is the reference to the condition of affairs at *Tirumurukaṉ Pūṇṭi* already described—*H.* 49). "Excepting you, I worship not other gods. I see not, if you do not show. If you show me I shall still see" (8). "You are capable of making even blind eyes to see". (Has it anything to do with

the blindness of the poet? Or, does it mean that the Lord is capable of showing things which the physical eyes cannot see?) (8). There are a few requests of the poet: "My Lord! I beg of you and pray for the birthless state. I pray for escaping from Hell" (3).

VI

In these stanzas occur the reference to *Māṇi* (2, 9) and '*Piḷḷai*' (4). "You came and joined those wayfarers. Is it fair that you should leave off and disappear in the middle. The *Māṇi* who descended into and bathed in the pond of *Pukkoḷiyūr* has duped me" (2). "The *Māṇi* that began to bathe inside the pond of *Pukkoḷiyūr* has duped me" (9). It is not clear what the incident in his life that the poet is referring to. "*Karaikkāl mutalaiyaip piḷḷai taraccollu Kālaṉaiyē*" (4) is the last line of the fourth verse and this remains a problem; for, the meaning given as referring to a miracle is not convincing. The construction seems to be peculiar. Has this anything to do with what the poet had spoken of probably in the *Kaḻumala hymn?* (58 : 9).

"*Maṟaiyiṭait tuṉintavar maṉaiyiṭai yiruppa*
Vañcaṉai ceytavar poykaiyu māyat
Tuṟaiyuṟak kuḷittuḷa tākavait tuytta
Vuṇmaiye ṉuntaka viṉmaiyai yōrēṉ
Piṟaiyuṭaic cataiyaṉai yeṅkaḷ pirāṉaip
Pēraru ḷāḷaṉaik kāriruḷ pōṉṟa
Kaṟaiyaṇi miṭaruṭai yaṭikaḷai yaṭiyēṉ
Kaḻumala vaḷanakark kaṇṭukoṇṭēṉē" (58:9).

VII

The poet speaks of himself as *Toṇṭaṉ* (10) and these are the verses which he had conceived and which are of growing fame. In singing this *hymn*, our poet must have experienced a spiritual calmness devoid of all miseries and he assures that those who can recite this will also enjoy the same experience.

CHAPTER XCVI

TIRUVAÑCAIKKAḶAM

(*Hymn* 4)

I

This is the *hymn* on the Father of *Añcaikkaḷam,* the temple at *Karūr* or *Vañci.* Every verse ends with the address, *'Añcaikkaḷattappaṉē'.* This usage of addressing God as *Appaṉ* of the temple as *Guruvāyūr Appaṉ, etc.,* is widespread even now in Malabar. Our poet had prayed for a birthless state (92:3). This *hymn* reveals the highest state of spiritual development, an intense emotion of *jñāna,* almost an identity with God, a natural loosening of attachment to the world as though there is no more use for him in this world, a readiness to quit the world if God so decides but no more assertions of his own, even if it be a prayer for birthless state or an escape from Hell—a feeling of self-surrender leaving everything to be done as God wills.

This *hymn* begins with questions about the peculiar ornaments of the Lord even as it was found in the *Bhikṣāṭana hymns* (No. 36, verse 7 and also in *hymn* No. 6). The *Bhikṣāṭana hymns,* as already referred to, form the one great motif of *Ārūrar's* art, as the best vehicle of his mystic thought. The personal narrations have been predominating latterly in his *hymns* but now comes the calm and peace and he with his childlike simplicity goes back to the *purāṇic* stories seeing therein the best way of expressing his experience of the Lord. The complete identity of love takes the form of the happy speech of a damsel in love with the *Bhikṣāṭana* form.

II

"Why (of what significance) is the adornment of the laurel of skulls on your crown?" (1). "Why is this wearing of the flood of the *Ganges* on your mat-lock?" (1) "Why is this clothing yourself with the tiger's skin and why this tightening it up with the tape of poisonous serpent?" (1). "Why is the wearing of the serpent after catching and making it dance?" (See the reference to holding of the serpent to dance in the *Bhikṣāṭana hymn*) (2). "Why thus adorning yourself with the crescent moon on the mat-

lock?" (2). "Why is this besmearing of the ash all over your body?" (2). "Why is this loving ride on the bull?" (2). "What is the fruit of salvation?" (5). "What is the result of birth?" (5). "When elephants are standing at your beck and call, why ride on the bull?" (5). "Why crown yourself with the damsel of the *Ganges* whilst you stand embracing the damsel of the mountain?" (5). "What is the thing you confer on those scholars who sing of You?" (5). "Why this midnight dance of the graveyard?" (6). "Why this begging with deadman's skull?" (6). "What is the substantial thing that those who worship and praise you get?" (6).

III

In a way all the mystic significance of the *Purāṇic* stories which we had explained elsewhere thus comes here as it were in a final flash with a glow of complete realization and mystic love. Without any such interrogations, the poet lovingly and significantly addresses the Lord's *purāṇic* personality as the Vēdic scholar with the ears wearing the shining *Kuṇḍala* (suggesting He is all ears) (8) and the Lord who vanquished *Rāvaṇa* (8), as the Lord who shines with the dark and sapphire like throat after the feast of poison (8), as the One who cut away one of the heads of *Brahma* and as the destroyer of the three cities (8). These addresses are continued with more direct and revealing experiences and conclusions of his. "You are the gooseberry fruit (tasting sweet every time it is enjoyed) to those who wake up ever contemplating on you. Whether they are great or small, if your thought begins to spread in their mind, they that worship you before anything else will never die and never be born again" (3). "You are the Seer of the Seers, the Eternal of the Eternals" (3). "You are like what the vowel is to the letters (or the life unto the pictures). You are like what the leaves (the feeders) are for the trees; You are like unto Yourself. You are like what the cloud is to the sprouting crops. You are the refuge of your servants" (4).

Then follow his assertions : "I assert or I say that You are the Creator, Destroyer, and Sustainer. I state that You are the significance of words uttered by the speakers. I state that You are the tongue, the ear and the eyes. O, Good ! Now I have realized you completely" (7). This is followed by two great assertions casually made in the midst of his joy of the *purāṇic* descriptions. "I have become sick of the surfeit of the domestic life and I

left it off completely" (8). "I will not forget you" (9). "He is our Lord and Master, the Lord of the Eternals, He who for ever showers His Grace on me, my Father of *Añcaikkaḷam*" (10).

IV.

The poet once again takes an innoncent pleasure in Nature and we have here the description of the sea port of *Vañci* of his times. The city is called *Makōtai*: *"Kaṭalaṅkaraimēl Makōtai aṉiyār poḻil Añcaikkaḷattappaṉē"* (1) — "The father of *Añcaikkaḷam* of groves in *Makōtai* in the sea beach". It is the fourth line in every one of the first nine verses except the third. To it, the first foot is added variously according to the rules of assonance — *"Alaikkuṅ kaṭal"* (1) — 'the sea where the waves roll to and fro'; *"Aṭittār kaṭal"* (2), *"Aṭikkum kaṭal"* (9) — 'the full sea which dashes against the beach'; *"Aḻaikkum kaṭal"* (4) — 'the sea that calls'; *"Āṭum kaṭal"* (5) — 'the sea that dances (with its waves) or plays'; *"Aravakkaṭal"* (6) — 'the sea of great noise'; *"Ārkkum kaṭal"* (7) — 'the roaring sea' and *"Antaṉ kaṭal"* (10) 'the beautiful cool sea'.

"The forceful waves like mountains draw inside the sea (everything caught) and then dash against the shore with a great roar and tease the '*valampuri*' conch carried by them" (1). "The forceful waves curl back and then run forward and dash against the beach so that the growing conches open their mouth and pour out their pearls" (2). "The waves like connected huge and dark mountains ceaselessly topple over the shore" (3). "The powerful waves like rain-bearing clouds draw in and dash against the beach with a roar calling in, with *valampuri* conches, the people" (4). "In the motion of the ships which have made possible the amassing of many a treasure, the dance of the sea is seen" (5). "The sea brings the conches, the oyster and the pearl and dashes them with force on the beach and with a roar resonating through the *valampuri* conches" (6). "Any number of ships are laden with many a treasure which inspire as with varied thoughts and the sea carries these ships pushing them on to move with a roar" (7). "A few forceful waves powerfully draw the things and thereafter dash against the beach with a roar as though straining the water with the '*valampuri*' conches they carry" (9).

Here we have a picture of the powerful Arabian sea carrying the ships to distant countries. It is surprising that our poet has given no such description of Negapatam or Pt. Calimere. The

mighty waves remind us of the activities of the Lord rising forth from the Absolute of an ocean blessing the world all through these activities, the pearls and conches and carrying the ships of all our efforts and dreams without realizing which we groan and moan in this world.

The poet has a vision of the Lord with the sea as the background and exclaims, "O, Lord, Our father of *Añcaikkaḷam,* Lord of the beautiful gardens on the sea! You look like the ruddy evening heavens" (3): — a beautiful description of the setting sun being thus deified in the eye of the saint. Whatever confusion and commotion might have been in the heart of the poet, they have completely disappeared, leaving a calm and peaceful experience of divinity, the commotion and confusion being now seen only in the waves springing up from the quiet ocean — even here the commotion and confusion being really the play of the Lord, play intended for the benefit of the souls which because of their blurred vision speak of confusion and commotion and run away from these blessings in fright and ignorance.

V

The poet has experienced whilst singing this *hymn* a calmness and peace of mind that he assures those who fall at the feet of the Lord with this garland of *hymn* of cool *Tamiḻ* of ever increasing rhythm that they will also experience the same peace of mind without any agitations or confusions of mind. Everything now becomes harmonious as music and whilst calling himself *Nampiyūraṉ,* the chief of the people of *Nāvalūr,* he describes that city of his as the place where resounds the musical rhythm of the drum and the flute with a restraint and slow movement (10).

CHAPTER XCVII

TIRUNOṬITTĀṈMALAI

(*Hymn* 100)

I

This *hymn* is on the Best Lord — *Uttamaṉ* — of *Noṭittāṉmalai* which is considered to be *Kailās,* the mountain of *Noṭittāṉ* or the Destroyer (*Noṭittāṉ* has this meaning of destruction as established by *Meikaṇṭār's* usage in his *Śivajñānabhōdam* — *Sūtram:* 1, *Veṇpā*: 4)). According to tradition, this *hymn* was sung when God sent him a white elephant for transporting him from this world to the *Kailās.* The *Kailās* is not only the name of the mountain but also the name of the highest Heavens according to the *Śaivite* mythology. *Śivalōkam, Rudralōkam* and *Paralōkam* have all been mentioned by our poet.

There are two sets of interpretations for these terms: One, which believes in *Padamukti* or *Sālōka,* holding that the highest spiritual development and salvation consists in reaching this highest sphere. The others, who believe in *Paramukti* or *Sāyujya,* hold, the highest spiritual development is to become one with the Lord and they interpret the *Śivalōka etc.,* as a spiritual state of Absolute communion with the Lord. This school of thought also speaks of a lower degree of spiritual development where souls reach a place of holiness and spirituality which is also called *Kailās* where *Srikaṇṭa Rudra,* one of the saved souls, given the power of rulership, resides to save the world.

Unless one holds that *Nampi Ārūrar* also believed in *Padamukti* and attained only what the other school of thought considers a lower order of spiritual attainment, it is difficult to understand this *hymn* literally. *Rāmānuja's* philosophy interprets the poems of *Āḻvārs* as holding out this *Padamukti* the highest state of spiritual development, though there are others who will controvert this position. The penultimate *hymn* in *Tiruvāymoḻi* beginning with the word *'Cūḻvicumpu'* gives his vision of the reception which the *Bhaktas* get when they reach *Vaikuṇṭa* or the world of *Viṣṇu.* The whole universe is said to be happy and welcoming along with the *ṛṣis* and celestials, these *Bhaktas* entering through the gates of

Vaikuṇṭa to the great *maṇṭapam* there. A reception, or rather something like that, is described in this *hymn* as having been offered to *Ārūrar.*

If this *hymn* is thus taken as having been sung when the poet reached the heavenly *Kailās,* the last verse has to be interpreted as an address to the Lord of the Ocean to carry this *hymn* to the *Cēra* King and through him to the people of the world; for according to tradition *Ārūrar* did not know the *Cēra* king following him on horse back.

II

If something more than *padamukti* is the ultimate goal of *Śaivism,* this *hymn* has to be interpreted metaphorically signifying the great *paramukti* itself or a vision thereof. An elephant, and that a white elephant, is said to have been offered to *Nampi Ārūrar.* The elephant usually signifies two different things; One is the gross materialism leading on to the slavery of five senses. The other is the unperturbed absolute knowledge in the form of *Praṇava.* By describing this elephant as being white, it is the latter interpretation that is suggested. The flaying of the elephant is the destruction of materialism while the story of riding on the white elephant represents reaching the state of spiritual development through the knowledge of *Praṇava.* The contrast between the material and the spiritual is emphasized by our poet in the second verse : "Is it to get rid of your enmity with the elephant you have flayed, you had offered me this elephant on which the eternals of the eternals of the heavens that circumambulate me have made me ride ?" (2).

The highest spiritual state is one of peace, self forgetful bliss losing oneself in God and this aspect is emphasized by the epithet *'matta'* in the phrase, *'Matta yāṉai'* (1). The beauty aspect of the Absolute is spoken of and emphasized by the description of the Lord as *'Aḷakaṉ'* in the big heavens (3). Its purity and knowledge aspects are emphasized by the term *'Veḷḷai yāṉai'* (5). That it is angry with the ways of the world is spoken of as it being the *'Veñciṉa yāṉai'* (16). The gradual spiritual development through higher and higher states of realization is spoken of as a kind of riding on the elephant and going up the mountain. The heavens and earth tremble in reverential love losing their old balance (7). It is the crown of everything and it is described as *'ciramali yāṉai'* (8), where there is a pun on the word *'ciram'* which means not only the zenith of spiritual perfection but also

thė high head of the elephant. Our poet often speaks of '*paramallatoru vēḻam*" (4, 6), a phrase usually cited with reference to spiritual joy and bliss (*Tiruvācakam* : 22 : 2) as something beyond what we could bear or control. This makes our suggestion that the elephant signifies a spiritual state, plausible.

III

Our poet also addresses his mind rhetorically interrogating it, "*Aḻakāṉai aruḷ purintatuntaramō* ?" (3). The heavens are said to welcome the rider on the elephant (1). The elephant is offered in the mid heavens far away from gross matter. It is not clear how this statement of the offer in the heavens has to be explained in the light of the usual version of the tradition that the elephant came down to earth to carry away *Nampi Ārūrar*. The deathless ones worship and go round the poet (2). The celestials are happy at the sight of this elephant-ride (5). "In the presence of these celestials the Lord who has always been residing in my mind has removed death and had offered me the elephant beyond my control" (6). It has been offered so that the poet may not embrace destruction. He speaks of his coming on the elephant through the (established) path (7).

The king of the seas bows down before our poet with his followers (7). This reminds us of *Nammāḻvār's* poem : "*Āḻkaṭal alaitirai kai eṭuttāṭiṉa*" : 'the sea raised up its hands of waves and danced in joy', thus suggesting the whole universe is happy at the spiritual development attained by the poet. Our poet also speaks of the reverential and loving tremble of the sea (7). All through the heavens or the various spheres of spiritual development there is the welcome to the poet which resounds long before he reaches the respective states. It is full of the sound of '*Hara Hara*', of *Āgamas* of songs of praises known to the *Jñānis* and the sound of the *Vēdas* mixing with these (8). *Indra, Viṣṇu, Brahma* and the beautiful *Dēvas* welcome the poet and for this consummation, the Lord has offered the elephant. The saints and seers, the great *munis* of *mantra* fame, so near the Lord, ask of Him, "Who is this ?" and the Lord replies "He is our man, *Ūraṉ*" (9). Probably it is this which is responsible for the story that when the *ṛṣis* enquired of *Upamanyu,* what that light appearing before them was which he was worshipping, this great master told them that the coming in of light was the returning of *Ārūrar* back to *Kailās.*

Vāṇa is mentioned as leading (*Valitara — Cintāmaṇi — V*. 989) his march (8). It is probably the *Vāṇaṉ* who has become the *Śivagaṇa,* to play on the pot drum whilst the Lord dances. "*Varamali Vāṇaṉ*" (8) is the full phrase and that will mean one who lives rich in his offerings of blessings, a fitting name for the Lord begging for our love and feeling happy only when He saves the souls while at other times does not feel like living at all.

IV

"*Ūṉuyir vēṟu ceytāṉ*" (1) — 'the Lord separated the body from the soul': that does not mean death; but signifies the conferring of a spiritual achievement where the souls become freed from the evils and sufferings of the body, a realization that the soul has nothing to do with this flesh. Therefore, when the poet speaks of the Lord exhibiting his body on the white elephant it must not be interpreted as referring to the corpse. In the *jīvan-mukta* state, the soul reaches its communion with the Lord, thanks to the conferment of the white elephant of true knowledge.

V

In the presence of this flood of God's Grace the poet looks very small and gives expression to his feeling of self-condemnation. "He created me. Realizing that, alas, what is it that I should sing unto His golden feet! He has counted me a dog as of some worth and offered me the elephant" (1). "I know no *mantra*. I, a slave, was intoxicated in my domestic life committing all faults and excesses, though assuming various forms of seeming beauty. He has offered me the beautiful elephant, O, my mind! Is it within your capacity ?" (3). "O, my heart! who art hankering after life! The Lord has transformed me, who was caught till now within the cruel fetter of *karmas* as a result of women. He has offered me the elephant" (4). "I was a deceit knowing not how to attain His feet with flowers and with contemplation on Him, and bringing all my five senses in concentration on Him. Still, He has been residing in my mind and he has removed my death and offered the elephant" (6).

VI

Our poet says, "I have seen and realized today thoroughly the fact that those born in this world and praise you through generations of your devotees, reach the world of gold" (5), meaning

thereby the precious and blissful state of salvation — *Kailās* or *Noṭittāṉmalai* which goes on growing through aeons after aeons. This spiritual state he is singing in verses as sweet as sugar, verses becoming famous all round. Our poet has with all his heart praised the Mountain, with the sweet *Tamiḻ* of seven tunes (10).

The poet calls himself *Nāvala Ūraṉ* and as we mentioned elsewhere he refers to his '*Sundara Vēṭam*' (3) probably suggesting to the later age the name *Cuntarar* for himself.

VII

The *hymn* closes with the statement or with an address to the king of the ocean that these ten verses should be made known to the father of *Añcai*, *Añcaiyappar*, who is no other than the Lord; for, in the previous *hymn* our poet has addressed the Lord as *Añcaikkaḷattappaṉ*. In the universal vision of the poet where the whole universe is happy, he feels that the very waves would carry this news of his bliss to the very Lord who has conferred the bliss.

VOLUME IV

SECTION A

RELIGION

INTRODUCTION

(1)

I

Nampi Ārūrar is a *Śaivite* in the sense he worships God as *Śiva*. The study of his *hymns* as revealing the progress and attainment of final spiritual or divine experience shows that he is a mystic. It is, therefore, difficult to define his creed and dogma. All the same, we learn from his poems certain ideals; certain means of attaining those ideals are referred to as prevalent in his time and as appealing to him. It is very difficult to identify his religion either as *Kāpālika's* or *Pāśupata's* or for that matter with any other sect. As a mystic he refuses to be a sectarian. The *Tāntric* forms of worship have become popular by the time of our poet, and he refers to *Āgamas* also. In his work, the 7th *Tirumuṟai,* there is one great *hymn* which is very significant. It is the *hymn* known as *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.*

This *Tiruttoṇṭattokai hymn* is important for giving us a clear idea of the Religious and Philosophical views dear to the heart of *Nampi Ārūrar*. It must be regarded that he has given the names of those saints of *Śaivism,* who, he thought, had a message to give to the world through their lives. It is true, that, in this selection of names, he must have been guided by the popularity of these names in his own age. The lives of the saints described in this *Tiruttoṇṭattokai hymn* give a concrete representation of the abstract principles of his *Religion* and *Philosophy*. Therefore, it becomes necessary to study this *hymn* in greater detail, for arriving at an estimate of *NampiĀrūraṟ's* conception of an ideal *Śaivite*.

A study of this *hymn* will give us an idea of religion, and religious ideas and practices, which appealed to *Ārūrar*.

To verify this conclusion, we have to study the other poems of *Ārūrar,* for finding out whether these ideas and practices are referred to there.

The *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* has been looked upon as the message, as it were, of *Ārūrar*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*, in his *Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti*, elaborates this *hymn Tiruttoṇṭaṭṭokai*, by singing a verse each on every one of the saints mentioned in the *hymn*, giving the details of the respective life of the saint. *Cēkkiḻār* has composed his great epic of *Periyapurāṇam*, giving the life history of these saints in the order in which the *hymn Tiruttoṇṭattokai* mentions them. The great *Śaiva Siddhānta* saint and philosopher *Umāpati Śivam* has summarized this great epic in a few verses known as *Tiruttoṇṭar Purāṇasāram*. The sculptures of all these saints are found in most of the great *Śaivite* temples from the age of *Dārāsuram* Temple. Therefore, we are right in searching for the views and ideals of *Ārūrar's* religion in this *hymn*.

But our poet *Nampi Ārūrar* gives only the names and sometimes the places of birth of these saints. For other details we have to go to the later day writers. The difficulty here is that it is not possible to conclude that all these details were also in the mind of *Ārūrar* while he sang the *hymn*. It is, therefore, necessary to find out how much of these details could have been known to *Ārūrar*. A comparative study of these later traditions along with the references found in *Ārūrar's* other poems and in the poets who went before him is undertaken to arrive at the irreducible minimum of knowledge about these saints which *Ārūrar* could have had.

II

From a study of the details of these saints, details which we can attribute to *Ārūrar*, we have to arrive at the religious practices and conceptions which appealed to *Ārūrar*. It is found that the tenth verse of the *hymn* helps us here and the grouping there is, therefore, followed in all the references to these kinds of worship in *Ārūrar's* poems themselves apart from this particular *hymn*.

Certain problems are raised with reference to this *hymn*, and they are incidentally discussed, so that the genuineness of the *hymn* and its proper significance may be brought out.

III

In the next part of the study, the significance of the conception of *Paramaṉaiyē Pāṭuvār* as the *Tamiḻ* mystic poets of whom *Ārūrar* is one, is explained at length from the point of view of *Tamiḻ* and *Tamilian* history. This *hymn* becomes the national poetry of the *Tamilians*. To avoid any parochialism or narrow

partisanship, *Ārūrar's* conception of *'Appālum Aṭiccārntār'* is *explained* as his final and universal vision.

The first study herein is the lives of the saints. The second part examines the religious ideals and practices which have appealed to *Ārūrar*. The third, studies the peculiar method of worship which *Cēkkiḻār* calls *'Arccaṉai pāṭṭē ākum'*[1] in relation to *Tamiḻ, Tamiḻ* Poetry, *Tamiḻ Mantras, Tamiḻ* Nationalism and Final Universalism of *Nampi Ārūrar*. In this part, to start with, certain problems relating to *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* are discussed and at the end his universalism is explained as yielding the fruit of his toleration of wider outlook, of harmony even with reference to *Jainism* and *Buddhism* which were considered by him as hostile to *Śaivism.*

(2)

I

A word may be said here about the lives of the saints of the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.*

Cēkkiḻār gives us the details of the lives of these saints in *Periyapurāṇam,* but this poet came nearly four or five centuries after *Ārūrar* either in the reign of *Kulōttuṅga II* or *Kulōttuṅga III.* Therefore, it is not possible to assume that all these details formed the prevalent tradition even in the time of *Nampi Ārūrar*. *Cēkkiḻār* states that he is closely following the stories or the details given by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*[2] probably referring to *Nampiyāṇṭār's Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti.* Even *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* came only in the 10th century A.D., whilst our poet *Nampi Ārūrar* lived in the 7th and 8th centuries (*Cf.*, Age of *Ārūrar* by the present writer), as the Epigraphists state: "The stories of the 63 *Śaiva* saints which must have been extant almost from the very period in which the saints flourished, were compiled in an abbreviated form by *Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi* in the time of *Rājarāja I,* under the name *Tiruttoṇḍattogai.*"[3]

1. *Taṭut.,* 70.
2. *Periyapurāṇam, Tirumalaic ciṟappu,* V. 39
3. (*Note*: *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* is not by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* but by *Nampi Ārūrar. Nampiyāṇṭār's* work is *Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti*). The latter work is referred to in No. 137 of *Appendix B* where mention is also made of the images of the Bhaktas (*i.e.,* the 63 *Śaiva devotees*) (*Annual Report* on *Epigraphy,* 1913).

II

In a few places, the description given by *Ārūrar* is not literal too according to the later tradition. The later tradition will be discussed at length but at this stage the fact of variation may be emphasized and explained. *Eṟipattar,* according to *Periyapurāṇam,* carried a *'paraśu'* (a war-axe), but *Ārūrar* describes him as the hero of *'Vēl'* (the spear)—*"Ilaimalinta vēl Nampi Eṟipattar"*.[4] The saint *Candēśvara* is described by our poet as using the *'maḻu'* (the axe)—*"Tātai tāḷ maḻuviṉāḷ eṟinta ...... Caṇṭi"*.[5] *Periya-purāṇam* describes the metamorphosis of a stick lying near *Caṇḍēś-vara* into an axe as soon as he touched it.

Māṉakkañcāṟar cuts away the lock of hair of his own daughter on the day of her marriage and *Ārūrar* does not specify this story, but describes him a *'Vaḷḷal'*—the great munificent donor, at the same time emphasizing the fact that any gift given, was not given away in a moment of weakness, for, according to *Ārūrar,* he had the shoulders as strong as hillocks—*"Malai malinta tōḷ vaḷḷal Māṉakkañcāṟaṉ"*.[6]

Tāyaṉ is a cultivator saint according to *Cēkkiḻār,* but our poet describes him as the *Tāyaṉ* of the scythe of completeness probably because it was the scythe of self sacrifice—*"Eñcāta Vāṭ-ṭāyaṉ"*.[7] Or, perhaps the *'vāḷ'* is mentioned because he was a chieftain and a patron.

Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār is described as famous for his cloud-like gifts; probably this was understood as referring to the story of *Śiva* sending a minstrel or *'Pāṇa'* to *Cēramāṉ,* with a song requesting the latter to honour the minstrel with proper gifts—*"Kārkoṇṭa koṭaik Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār"*.[8]

Ciṟappuli is described as *"Cīirkoṇṭa pukaḻ vaḷḷal"*[9]—the munificent patron of excellent fame. Nothing more is said. According to *Periyapurāṇam,* however, he belonged to *Ākkūr,* whose residents were praised by *Campantar* in his innumerable verses

4. 7:39:2.
5. 7:39:3.
6. 7:39:2.
7 7:39:2.
8. 7:39:6.
9. 7:39:6.

as great patrons and probably it is this which prompts our poet to describe *Ciṟappuli* in those terms.

Kuṟṟuva Nāyaṉār is described as "*Ārkoṇṭa vēl Kūṟṟaṉ*".[10]

This saint was desirous of being crowned at *Citamparam* like the *Cōḻas*. The meaning of the phrase '*Ārkoṇṭa*' is not clear. Does it mean that he himself assumed the laurel of '*ātti*' of the *Cōḻas*?

Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyar is described as a true servant of the Lord—"*Meyyaṭiyāṉ Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ*".[11]

Kaṇampullar is described as having for his armour or protection, the heroic feet of the Lord of the blotted throat—"*Kaṟaikkaṇṭaṉ kaḻalaṭiyē kāppukkoṇṭirunta Kaṇampulla Nampi*".[12] But the story in the *Periyapurāṇam* refers only to this saint burning away his own head (tuft).

Ārūrar speaks of *Poyyaṭimaiyillāta Pulavar*,[13] when he is enumerating individual saints but *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* has taken this to refer to the poets of the *Caṅkam* age in which case it will be a reference to a group of saints. Groups of saints are referred to in the 10th verse and, therefore, the reference to a group in the seventh verse is not in keeping with the scheme adopted by *Ārūrar*. Some have suggested that this may be a reference to *Māṇikkavācakar*, whom, some, however, will bring down to the 9th century A.D. *Cēkkiḻār* seems to describe this *Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavar* as an individual, though not specifically.

Ārūrar describes *Ceruttuṇaiyār* as the king of *Tañcai*.[14] But *Periyapurāṇam* speaks of him as one belonging to the community of cultivators—"*Vēḷāṉ kuṭi mutalvar*", but courageous enough to cut away the nose of the *Pallava* Queen, who smelt with the nose, the flowers to be offered to *Śiva*. This is the story given by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*. One wonders whether after all, this is the significance of the term *Tañcaimaṉṉaṉ*.

10. 7:39:6.
11. 7:39:7.
12. 7:39:8.
13. 7:39:7.
14. 7:39:9.

Ceṅkaṇār, the great *Cōḻa* king, is described curiously enough as "*Teṉṉavaṉāyulakāṇṭa Ceṅkaṇār*".[15] Ordinarily, the word *Teṉṉavaṉ* refers to a *Pāṇḍya*. As already noted, our poet is thinking of the whole *Tamiḻ* Land as a unity and in this sense calls *Ceṅkaṇār,* the Lord of the *Tamiḻ* Land or the Land of the South. This interpretation is justified by the usage of the word *Teṉṉaṉ* in verse No. 8 of the *hymn* No. 38.

Ārūrar mentions one '*Catti*' and describes him as "*Kaḻal Catti*"[16] and "*Variñcaiyarkōṉ*".[17] This will make him a heroic king but in the traditional story given in *Periyapurāṇam,* he is said to belong to the cultivator's community and he came to be known as *Catti* because he carried a weapon of that name. *Catti* is a proper name which has been assumed by several chieftains of the *Tamiḻ* land of that age. We know of a *Pallava Śakti;* and *Śaktinātha* is one of the hereditary titles assumed by the Lords of *Muṉaippāṭi-nāṭu, Milāṭu* or *Cēti-nāṭu.*[18] One wonders whether all the saints mentioned in that line[19] *Kalikkampaṉ, Kaliyaṉ* and *Catti* might not be chieftains. The *Kalabhras* are known as *Kaliyaracar,* and it may be suggested for consideration whether those names in which the term *Kali* appears may not be members of this family of *Kalabhras* or *Kaliyaracar; Kalikkampaṉ, Kaliyaṉ* and *Kalikkāmaṉ* (*Ēyarkōṉ*) are all names in which this *Kali* appears. *Kaliyaṉ* is known to be the name of *Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār.* But *Kaliyaṉ* mentioned in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* is according to *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi,* a *cakkiri,* an oilmonger, working at the oil mill. It may be that this *Kaliyaṉ* was also the chieftain or that the name *Kaliyaṉ* came to be so popular that even oil mongers came to assume it after their kings. In this connection, we come across an interesting phrase "*Viraiyāk kali*" where the word '*kali*' is used in the sense of '*āṇai*' or order[20] this sense must have grown up during the rule of these *Kali* tribes or *Kalabhras.*

Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār is said to be a *Kaḷappāḷar* according to *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi. Kaḷappāḷar* are also considered as *Kalabhras. Accutakkaḷappāḷar* is known to literature; probably, he is

15. 7:39:11.
16. 7:39:7.
17. 7:39:7.
18. 120/1900.
19. 7:39:7.
20. *Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti,* V. 68; *Kōtpuli Nāyaṉār Purāṇam,* V. 4.

the *Accyuta* of *Buddhadatta.* *Mūrkka Nāyaṉār* is described by *Nampiyāṇṭār* as *Tiruvēṟkāṭṭu Maṉṉaṉ;* we hear of one *Kali Mūrkka Iḷavaraiyaṉ,*[21] who is also called *Vāli Vaṭukaṉ.* Though it may be a far fetched suggestion, one is tempted to wonder whether this *Kali Mūrkkaṉ* was a descendant of *Mūrkka,* and *Kaḷappāḷar* are considered to be *Kalabhras.* *Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāma* is said to be a member of the cultivators' community and *Kaḷappāḷar* are found to belong to this community in later times. But the title *Ēyarkōṉ* should be given some significance. *Ēyar* is the *Tamilian* form of *Hēhayas* as may be seen from *Peruṅkatai.*[22] *Hēhayas* are *yādavas.* In the *Pallava* age, the chieftains and kings trace their relatives to the *Purāṇic* families and this may be one of such cases. The *Vēḷir* are said to have come from '*Tuvarai*' and from this Prof. M. Raghava Aiyangar had argued that the *Vēḷir* belonged to the family of *yādavas.*

III

All these are mentioned only to show how difficult it is to make out the history of these saints. Even *Cēkkiḻār* gives precious little about some of these saints treating of them within five to ten verses. We can only conclude that *Cēkkiḻār* has given us the tradition as it reached him. From this it will be very difficult to conclude that the same traditions obtained in the age of *Nampi Ārūrar.* Prof. K. Nīlakaṇṭa Sāstry's remarks, in this connection, strengthens our conclusion: "Great as must be the authority of *Nambi* and his successors in matters of religion and theology in dealing (with Mr. Sesha Aiyangar) that the history involved in their interpretation of the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai* seems to be, much of it, wrong. The point is that continuity in religious tradition seems to be quite compatible with a break in secular historical tradition. For an illustration I may refer to the case of another saint in the list, *Seruttuṇai* who is spoken of as a king of *Tanjore* by *Sundaramūrti; Nambi* makes no mention of his having been a king at all, evidently because in his day nothing was known about such a ruler of Tanjore; and a little later, *Sēkkiḻār* in his *Periyapurāṇam* actually makes a *Vaisya* (*Vēḷāṇ kuṭi mutalvar*) of this king of Tanjore".[23]

21. 348/1914.
22. *Vattava Kāṇṭam,* 8:44.
23. The *Pāṇḍyan Kingdom,* p. 67.

IV

This line of argument puts us on our guard against assuming the other stories also as historical facts. Religious persecution, for instance, was never so severe in the *Tamil* country as in other lands. But the *Tamilians* compensated this by writing imaginary stories about such persecutions. One such story is the impaling of the 8,000 *Jains* by *Campantar;* but there is not a whisper about it in any of the inscriptions of the age, and the number 8,000 itself in these ages makes this an impossible story. *Cēkkiḻār* could not help mentioning this incident because by his time it had become an established tradition strengthened by the reference in *Nampiyāṇṭāṟ's* verses. Whenever there is a story of cruelty we have to be, therefore, on our guard in taking it at its face value. There is a story of *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* cutting away the hand of his own Royal consort after another saint *Ceruttuṇai* has cut away her nose. *Ṇampi Ārūrar* gives one whole line for this king but says not a word about this incident. When names of kings are mentioned, we must take it that it had been done so because they patronized the religious propagation. It must not however be thought that there could have been no cruel act especially in that age of political confusion and incessant wars, justifying the use of force for protecting *Śaivism;* for, *Ārūrar* himself mentions *Caṇḍēśvara* cutting off the feet of his father. It must be added that this is not an act of intolerance and act done by one who was lost in the thought of God. But the majority of the stories gives us a picture of the life of self-sacrifice and a life guided by the ideal, practised by even very ordinary men, under trying circumstances.

V

As in the case of other traditions, the stories of these saints also must have been developing from time to time. We may leave off these *Purāṇas* later than that of *Cēkkiḻār*. But from the inscriptions and the icons and paintings in the temples and from the works of *Paṭṭinattār* and others till the age of *Cēkkiḻār,* we could see this development. The *Rājarājēccuram* of *Tanjore* built by *Rājarāja I* forms a landmark. We have therein the images representing the story of *Caṇḍēśa* consecrated,[24] in addition to the images of *Nampi Ārūrar, Paravai, Campantar* and *Apppar.*[25]

24. *S.I.I., Vol. II,* 29, 59 *and* 60.
25. *Ibid,*

The images of the *Bhairava, Ciruttoṇṭar, Veṇkāṭṭu Naṅkai* and *Cīraḷadēva*—all relating to the story of *Ciruttoṇṭar* were made and consecrated.[26] The paintings of the *Cōḻa* age brought to light by Sri S. K. Govindaswamy Pillai of *Aṇṇāmalai* University give us a few scenes from the life of *Ārūrar* and if further examinations are made underneath the later paintings, more *Cōḻa* pictures of the *Śaivite* saints may be revealed.

VI

We may now proceed to study these stories in the light of these references. *Ārūrar* sings of these saints in eleven verses and the *Śaivite* tradition has grouped its study of these saints under these eleven groups and we may follow this method, to find out how much of these stories of the saints can be proved today to have been in the mind of *Ārūrar* when he sang the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* This is not to minimize the greatness or historical value of *Periyapurāṇam* or *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti.* Unfortunately, in spite of their historical research of a very high order they gave us only poetry which does not and ought not to tell us the historical evidences they had gathered. To those who believe as ardent *Śaivites* nothing more is needed. This study is intended for placing before the world, an objective study of *Ārūrar's* poems—a world in which there are more *non-Śaivites* than *Śaivites.* It is, therefore, necessary to give the irreducible minimum that we are sure must have been in the mind of *Ārūrar,* an irreducible minimum which is enough to give us an ideal of *Ārūrar's* ideals of religion which appealed to him as such from the lives of these great saints.

26. *Ibid*, 43, 44.

PART I

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ŚAIVITE SAINTS THE TIRUTTOṈṬATTOKAI

CHAPTER I

TILLAI VĀḺ ANTAṈAR CARUKKAM

I

The *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the mention of *Tillai Vāḻ Antaṇar*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* praises them as those who do all the service to the Lord of *Citamparam* by right—"*Piṟaiyaṇinta tupparkku urimaittoḻil purivōr*". *Cēkkiḻār* praises them further, their *tapas* and *dānam*, their *yajña*, their *jñānam*, *māṉam* (honour), patience and conquest of the mind, probably basing on the references to those *Brahmins* in *Campantar's hymns*. According to *Periyapurāṇam*, this beginning of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*, "*Tillai Vāḻ Antaṇartam Aṭiyārkkum Aṭiyēṉ*" was suggested to *Ārūrar* by Lord *Śiva* Himself. *Cēkkiḻār* also mentions that they were 3,000 in number. For this statement he must have relied upon not only the tradition of his day but the reference to them by *Ārūrar* himself—"*Muṭṭātamuccanti mūvāyiravarkku mūrtti eṉṉappaṭṭāṉ*"[1]—'Their greatness consists in the continuous worship of *Naṭarāja* in the temple at *Citamparam* thrice a day'.

II

"*Tirunīlakaṇṭattuk kuyavaṉār*" is the second in the list of saints: "*Tirunīlakaṇṭattuk kuyavaṉārkkaṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of the potter of *Tirunīlakaṇṭa*'—thus sings *Ārūrar*. *Nampiyāṇṭār* refers to this saint renouncing the physical pleasures of his wife and becoming young along with her by the Grace of God after he had become old. His work suggests that *Tirunīlakaṇṭar* was the name of this saint. But there is a difference between the phrase "*Tirunīlakaṇṭak kuyavaṉ*" used by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and "*Tirunīlakaṇṭattuk kuyavaṉ*" used by *Ārūrar*. Basing on this difference, *Cēkkiḻār* accepted a tradition that this

1. 7:90:7.

saint was so much impressed with the message of the name *Tirunīlakaṇṭa* that he was always uttering that sacred name. He tells us that once he went astray and his wife, therefore, swore on this sacred name so that he might not touch her. They, however, lived together but without any physical contact. *Śiva* came as a *Śivayōgi* with an earthen bowl and left it in the custody of the saint who was distributing such bowls free to *Śaivites*. *Śiva* made it disappear and demanded the old vessel without agreeing to take a substitute. He insisted upon the couple catching hold of each other's hands and bathing in the tank and swearing that the bowl was really lost. The saint had to explain the incident which led to the resolution of himself and his wife not to have any physical contact. Therefore, they held a stick and bathed to come out only rejuvenated. This skeleton in their cupboard had thus been removed. It was thorn as it were in the unconscious mind. The confession made them whole, removing the lurking feeling of crime and shame. *Ārūrar* speaks of this saint as a potter and the service he had undertaken according to *Cēkkiḻar* was the free distribution of earthen bowls to *Śaivites*. One may take it that this is implied in the description of this saint as a potter by *Ārūrar*. His reverence for the name of *Tirunīlakaṇṭam* as mentioned by *Cēkkiḻār* is suggested by the description of this saint as *Tirunīlakaṇṭattuk kuyavaṉār*. The message of this name had been discussed at length in our study of the swallowing of the poison by Lord *Śiva*.[2] *Ñāṉacampantar* has sung a *hymn* on *Tirunīlakaṇṭam* which suggests that he also cherished great love and reverence for this name.[3] One wonders whether the potter saint came after *Campantar* learning the sacredness of this name from this *hymn*.

III

Iyaṟpakai Nāyaṉār is the third saint. The description given by *Ārūrar* is that he never said 'no' or 'I have not' — "*Illaiyē eṉṉāta Iyaṟpakaikkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Iyaṟpakai* who never said no'. The story goes that he did what ordinary nature would rebel against, *i.e.* gave away his wife to a *Brahmin Śaivite* devotee and slaughtered his relatives when they attempted to prevent him from doing so. This is said to explain his name '*Iyaṟpakai*' which is translated as '*Aihika ripu*' or '*Svabhāva ripu*'.

2. *Vol.,* II.
3. 1:116.

Such translations of the names of these saints as found in *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* works are not always correct. The word *'iyal'* is found in *Tēvāram*[4] in the sense of rivalry. Probably it is a variant form of the word *'ikal'* in which case the name *'Iyaṟpakai'* will mean, one who conquers his rivals. The tradition found in *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* works describes him as a *Dravidian* king, thus strengthening our suspicion that many of the persons mentioned in the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* were kings and chieftains, the great patrons of *Śaivism*.[5] There is also another tradition found in those books which will support *Cēkkiḻār's* version that he was a *Vaiśya*.[6] The place of his birth is given as *Pukār* or *Kāvirippūmpaṭṭiṉam* by both *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and *Cēkkiḻār*. One wonders whether the tradition about giving away his wife might not have arisen on the basis of a forced interpretation of *Ārūrar's* line, *"Illaiyē eṉṉāta Iyaṟpakai"*, when *'illaiyē'* was interpreted twice, once as 'wife' and again as 'no'. What *Ārūrar* praises is the munificence of the saint knowing not the word 'no'.

IV

The fourth saint in the list is *'Iḷaiyāṉkuṭi Māṟar'*. *"Iḷaiyāṉṟaṉkuṭi Māṟaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Māṟaṉ* of *Iḷaiyāṉkuṭi*, is how *Ārūrar* sings. 'R' is pronounced as 'D' even now, for instance, in Ceylon where *'niṉṟa'* is pronounced as *'niṇḍa'* and this line of *Ārūrar* seems to have been read as *'Iḷaiyāṇḍa Kuḍimāṟaṉ'*; and this is the form with its variant *'Ilānaṇḍa Kuṭimāṟa'* that is found in the *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions.[7] *Śaivite* ascetics were sometimes called *'Āṇḍār'* and this must have been in the mind of the people who misread *Ārūrar's* line like this. *'Iḷaiyāṉṟaṉkuṭi'* is simply the name of a village, named after *'Iḷaiyāṉ'* as *Iḷaiyāṉkuṭi*. The name *Iḷaiyāṉkuṭimāṟaṉ* is found *'Iḷaiyamāraṅguḍi Māṟar'* in the sculptures in the temple at *Dārāsuram*.[8] One wonders whether the village itself was called after this great saint. According to the story found in *Periyapurāṇam*, after he had lost all he had in his undertaking to offer food to *Śaivites*, *Śiva* appeared before him on a rainy night in the form of a *Śivabhakta* and *Māṟar* at the sug-

4. 1:108:1; 3:11:1; 3:106:3.
5. *Mys. Arch. Report*, 1925.
6. *Ibid.*, *p.* 6.
7. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, p. 6.
8. *A.R.E.*, 1919-20, *pl.* 6, *fig.* 50.

gestion of his wife brought the corn he had sown in his field and used the bamboo rafters of his house as fire-wood for preparing the food. The word *Māṟaṉ* is usually the title of the *Pāṇḍyas*. *Cēkkiḻār* makes him a *Śūdra*. As officers under the king bear the names of their masters, our saint might have been an officer under the *Pāṇḍyas* if he himself was not a *Pāṇḍya*. In the sculpture at *Dārāsuram*, on the left side appears *Śiva* on a bull with *Pārvatī*, representing the final scene of the story. Next to that we find a person seated before a tripod on which is the food served with reverence by a lady, *i.e.*, the wife of *Māṟar*. The right side portion depicts a man, that is *Māṟar*, bringing a load of corn which his wife is helping to unload on the ground. *Nampiyāṇṭār* mentions the bringing in of the corn sown and the using of rafters of the house as fuel. But he does not refer to the wife of *Māṟar* whereas in the story of *Cēkkiḻār*, and in the sculpture she plays an important part. The *Tillai in Tillaivāḻ Antaṇar* is applicable to *Tirunīlakaṇṭattuk kuyavaṉār* also because the latter also is said to belong to *Tillai*. If this were so, one may not be wrong in taking the expression '*Illaiyē eṉṉāta*' as a description of '*Iḷaiyāṉkuṭi Māṟaṉ*' as well.

V

The fifth saint is described by *Ārūrar* as "*Vellumā mika valla Meypporuḷ* — '*Meypporuḷ* who is very capable of conquering'. He is called '*Meypporuḷ Vēntaṉ*' and '*Cētiyar Perumāṉ*' by *Cēkkiḻār*. *Cēkkiḻār* seems to suggest that he earned the title of *Meypporuḷ* because he realized *Meypporuḷ* or truth. "*Meyttava vēṭamē Meypporuḷ*" is what *Cēkkiḻār* says in this *Nāyaṉār Purāṇam*.[9] The true *Śaivite* form is the greatest truth. It is because of this realization, the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* works translate his name as *Siddhirāja*. An enemy of the saint knowing the latter's devotion to the *Śaivite* form and his search for *Āgamas* came in the form of a *tapasvin* pretending to carry a bundle of *Āgamas*. He had a free entrance to the king's retiring room where he killed the saint whilst he (the latter) was prostrating at the feet of this *tapasvin*. One servant *Tattaṉ* seeing this, hurried to punish this murderer but the dying king prevented him saying that 'he is our man'. This is considered as real conquest through the path of love and *satyāgraha* as opposed to the conquest by sword and

9. No, 15,

hatred and *Cēkkiḻār* emphasizes this by saying *"Meyttava vēṭamē meypporuḷeṉat toḻutu veṉṟār"*. It is the victory of humility, love and self-sacrifice in the name of the sacred form of *Śaivism. Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* mentions all these incidents and an inscription of *Rājarāja I* states that an image was installed for this saint who is described therein as *"Tattā namarē kāṇēṉṟa Milāṭuṭaiyār"*.[10] He is a king of *Cēti* country. *Milāṭu* is *'Malai Nāṭu'* whose capital was *Tirukkōvalūr*. The name of the enemy is given as *Muttanātaṉ* and some manuscripts of *Periyapurāṇam* read *'bu'* instead of *'mu', i.e., Buddhanātaṉ* for *Muttanātaṉ*. It is possible on the basis of this reading that the *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* works describe him as a *Buddhist* feudatory of *Śedirāja-Siddharāja-Meypporuḷ Nāyaṉār*.[11]

VI

The sixth saint is *Viṟaṉmiṇṭar*. *Miṇṭar* must be the proper name, coming from the word *'miṇṭu'* meaning strength. *'Viṟal'* means victory. *Ārūrar* sings, *"Viripoḻil cūḻ Kuṉṟaiyār Viṟaṉmiṇṭarkkaṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of *Viṟaṉmiṇṭar* of *Kuṉṟai*, surrounded by gardens'. His place is *Kuṉṟai*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* states that it is *Ceṅkuṉṟam* whilst *Cēkkiḻār* is more definite in making it the *Ceṅkuṉṟūr* of the *Cēra* country. The description given by *Ārūrar* will suggest a victorious warrior. *Cēkkiḻār* will make him belong to the *Vēḷāṉ kulam*. He is said to have disapproved of *Ārūrar's* not worshipping the *Bhaktas* before worshipping *Śiva*, (We have to discuss more about this for fixing the occasion when *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* was sung) and he disapproved of even Lord *Śiva's* accepting *Ārūrar* as his devotee. The principle was gradually becoming accepted that the worship of *Bhaktas* was superior to the worship of *Śiva* himself. But *Ārūrar* does not seem to suggest anything more than a victorious warrior or king serving *Śaivites* and *Śaivism*. The saint is called in the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions *'Śaṅgu Nāyaṉār'* or *Vīramiṇḍa* or *Mereminḍa Nāyaṉār*. It is not clear whether the name *Saṅgu* has any reference to the *'śaṅga'* of *Bhaktas* or whether it is a corruption of the place named *Ceṅkuṉṟūr* where he is said to have been born. *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions will make it appear that he disliked *Ārūṟar* because of his haughty indifference towards *Śaivites* and of his love for prostitutes.

10. *S.I.I., Vol. II, No.* 40.
11. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, *p.* 6.

VII

The next saint is described as "*Allimel mullaiyantār Amarnītik kaṭiyēṉ*" by *Ārūrar* — 'I am the servant of *Amarnīti* of the garland made of the petals of soft jasmine. This saint is said to belong to the *Vaiśya (Vaṇikar)* community according to *Cēkkiḻār*. *Mullai* garland is said to belong to the shepherd community by *Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar* in his commentary on *Cintāmaṇi* and the shepherds are considered to be *Gōvaiśyas* in the later day tradition. *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes *Paḻaiyāṟai* as his birth place and *Nallūr*, his place of *Śaivite* activity. *Cēkkiḻār* in addition refers to a *mutt* constructed by *Amarnīti* at *Tirunallūr*. This saint is said to have been giving food and clothing to the worshippers of *Śiva* and that one day *Śiva* coming in the garb of a *Brahmachāri* left a '*kaupīna*' or a loin cloth to be kept under safe custody and to be given back after his return from his bath. The loin cloth disappeared mysteriously and the *Brahmachāri* insisted upon an equal weight of cloth or articles. Everything *Amarnīti* had, could not equal the weight of the loin cloth and the saint had to weigh his wife, his child and himself to equalize the pans thus becoming the slaves of the *Brahmachāri*. *Nampiyāṇṭār* speaks of only the wife and the saint being weighed. A sculpture found at the *Paḻaiyāṟai* temple, a photo of which appears in Mr. C. K. Subrahmanya Mudaliyar's commentary of *Periyapurāṇam, Vol. I,* opposite to p. 684 represents the story of weighing and wherein the wife is found carrying a son as stated in *Periyapurāṇam*. The name of the saint is found as *Amarnīti* in the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* works[12] suggesting the *nīti* or justice of the *Dēvas*. It is not possible to read the verse of *Ārūrar* so as to give this form. *Amarnīti* will mean the justice that has come to stay or that was wished for. The story of this merchant saint being entrusted with the loin cloth at *Nallūr* and become deluded by the *māyā* of the Lord to be saved in the end was known to *Appar* and must have been known to *Ārūrar*, though the weighing is not referred to:

"*Nāṭkoṇṭa tāmaraip pūttaṭam cūḻntanal lūrakattē*
Kīḻkoṇṭa kōvaṇam kāveṉṟu collik kiṟipaṭattāṉ
Vāṭkoṇṭa nōkki maṉaiyoṭum āṅkōr vāṇikaṉai
Āṭkoṇṭa vārttai uraikkum aṉṟōiv vakaliṭamē"[13]

The reference to the garland will show that he was not an ascetic.

12. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, p. 7.
13. 4:97:7.

CHAPTER II

ILAIMALINTA CARUKKAM

I

The next verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* starts with the description of *Eṟipattar, "Ilaimalinta vēl Nampi Eṟipattark kaṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of *Eṟipattar*, the lord of the leaflike spear'. *Nampiyāṇṭār* gives a story that the saint slew the riders of the elephant of *Pukaḻaccōḻa* when he heard that it had snatched a flower basket from the hand of a *tapasvin.*[1] *Eṟipattar's* place of birth is given as *Karuvūr*. This is on the basis of *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* making this saint a contemporary of *Pukaḻccōḻa* who is said to have died at *Karuvūr* and according to *Ārūrar, "Poḻiṟkaruvūrt tuñciya Pukaḻccōḻarkkaṭiyēṉ"*. In the verse describing *Pukaḻccōḻa's* greatness *Nampiyāṇṭār* states that the *Cōḻa* had handed over his sword to *Eṟipattar* thus earning the epithet *Pukaḻ*. The name of the *Śaivite* whose flowers were snatched by the elephant is given as *Çivakāmiyāṇṭār* by *Cēkkiḻār*, who explains the story in a connected form. *Cēkkiḻār* makes *Eṟipattar* kill not only the riders but also the elephant, the *Paṭṭavardhana*. But when the *Cōḻa* came on the scene, he felt that no *Śaivite* could have been in the wrong and that *Eṟipattar* must have saved a greater calamity by killing the men and the elephant. He thought that he himself ought to have been punished and therefore handed over the sword to *Eṟipattar* with a request that he himself might be killed by way of punishment for all that had happened. The wild *Eṟipattar* was so moved by this act that he became a convert to the faith of self-sacrifice.

Cēkkiḻār has really made a wonderful story of mental and spiritual development out of the two remarks found in two different verses of *Nampiyāṇṭār*, thereby showing that the glory of *Eṟipattar* did not consist in his slaughter of the elephant and riders but in his final attempt at self-conquest inspired by the glorious example of *Pukaḻccōḻa*. But all this is not clear in the *hymn* of *Ārūrar*: whereas *Cēkkiḻār* will have *Eṟipattar* wield his battle-axe, *Ārūrar* speaks of only the spear. The description of *Ārūrar* amounts to nothing more than that of a *Vīrabhakta*.

1. *Tiruṭ. Tiruvan.*, 9, 50.

We can in this connection take up for consideration the story of *Pukalccōla*. *Ārūrar* describes him merely as *"Polir Karuvūrt tuñciya Pukalc cōlarkkatiyēn"* — 'I am the servant of *Pukalc-cōla* who died in the garden city of *Karuvūr*.' He describes him as the 41st saint in his list. Students of *Caṅkam* literature know that the kings were sometimes differentiated by reference to the place of their death. Such a practice seemed to have continued during the age of *Ārūrar* as well. That is why the poet speaks of *Pukalccōla* who died at *Karuvūr* of gardens. This will suggest that during the troubled times of the *Kalabhra interregnum,* the *Cōlas* had to migrate to *Karuvūr* of the *Cōla-Kērala Maṇḍala*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi,* as already pointed out, does not mention anything more than this *Cōla* handing over the sword to *Eripattar* as the true fame of this king (50). But *Cēkkilār* makes *Uraiyūr* his place of birth, the old *Cōla* capital, and makes him go to *Karuvūr* for receiving the tributes from his feudatories when the story of *Eripattar* takes place. He leads an expedition against *Atikan,* who failed to pay tribute. The king saw amongst the heads of the defeated people brought before him one head of a *Śaivite* devotee with the usual braided hair. He considered that this was the greatest sin that the king could commit, *viz.,* killing a *Śaivite* devotee probably a *Śaivite* ascetic; and as a penance he burnt himself away in a fire specially prepared. *"Karuvūrt tuñciya"* ordinarily may not mean burning oneself away to death unless the reading was, *"Polir karuvūrt tīt tuñciya"*. If there was any such reading *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* would have given a different version. Perhaps *Cēkkilār* learnt some details of *Pukalccōla Nāyaṉār* from the traditions prevalent in the *Koṅku* country. In the *Dārāsuram* temple, there is a sculpture with the inscription, '*Pugalchchōlaṉār*' which gives the story as described in *Periya-purāṇam*. On the right hand side, there are three men holding swords in their right hands; probably these were the soldiers or commanders who went to war against *Atikan*. Next to them in the middle is the king on the seat. On either side are found two men holding their hands in *añjali* pose, probably the ministers of state informing their king. Next, to the left, is found a person, *viz.,* the king himself without the blazing fire. The left hand corner shows *Śiva* and *Pārvatī* coming on the sacred bull to bless the saint.[2] Whereas in these stories the king burns himself away to

2. *A.R.E.,* 1919-20, *Plate V.*

reach *Kailās,* in the *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* works *Śiva* intervenes to save him from the fire.[3] It will be very difficult to prove that the development of the story which must have taken place only after the age of *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* could have been in the mind of *Ārūrar.*

The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* works give the name of *Eṟipattar* as *Iripattunāyaṉār, Iribhakta* and *Vīrabhakta;* the king is variously named as *Maṉuchōḻa, Anapāyanayachōḻa* and *Pogaḻchōḻa.*[4]

II

The ninth saint in the list is *Ēṉātināta Nāyaṉār. Ārūrar* sings, "*Ēṉāti nātaṉṟaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Ēṉātināta',* giving no further particulars. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* states he belongs to *Eyiṉi* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies as *Eyiṉaṉūr,* a fortified old city in the *Cōḻa* country. *Nampiyāṇṭār* calls him *'Īḻakkula tīpaṉ'* — the light of the *Īḻa* community. *Īḻa* means *Ceylon.* One wonders if he has anything to do with Ceylon. But *Cēkkiḻāṟ* makes him *Īḻakkulac cāṉṟār,* which term is interpreted as referring to the toddy drawers. He is made to teach the princes, the art of sword. *Aticūra,* his agnatic relation, became envious and challenged *Ēṉāti* for a duel. The saint accepted the challenge and he was about to win when seeing the ashes on the head of his enemy which the latter purposely disclosed at the proper juncture, *Ēṉātināta* allowed himself to be killed pretending to fight to the end, so that no blot might fall on *Aticūra* whose head was shining with the sacred ash. *Ēṉāti* was a title given to the heroic or victorious commanders from the time of the *Tamiḻ Caṅkam* by the three great Royal families of the *Tamiḻ* land. This *Ēṉātināta* must be one of such recipients of the title. Since *Ārūrar* does not mention anything further, one may not be wrong in assuming that he was one of *Ēṉāti* title holders of his time. *Mānavamma,* from the *Īḻa* country or *Ceylon,* we know from *Mahavamsa,* had been at the *Pallava* court and also was commanding an army to help *Narasiṁha* as against the ruler of *Vātāpi.* One wonders whether *Ārūrar* was referring to one such commander.

3. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* p. 9.
4 *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* p. 7.

III

The next saint, the tenth, is *Kaṇṇappar* and *Ārūrar* sings, "*Kalaimalinta cīr Nampi Kaṇṇapparkkaṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Kaṇṇappar*, great for his knowledge'. *Ārūrar* has referred to *Kaṇṇappar* in other places as, "*Kaṇaikoḷ Kaṇṇappaṉ*",[5] one who wields the arrow; "*Iṭanta Kaṇṇappaṉ*",[6] where the story itself is expresed in the phrase that he scooped out his eye and fixed it on, probably in the eye of the Lord. In these two places, he says the Lord had blessed him with His love and therefore *Ārūrar* himself came to beg for God's Grace. In a third place,[7] he just mentions the name *Kaṇṇappaṉ* in enumerating a few *Śaivite* saints whose mistakes God considered as good acts and states that this policy of the Lord had brought him to take refuge in Him. The bad act that could be attributed to *Kaṇṇappar* could only be his hunting the animals and feeding the Lord with animal food. *Ñaṉa-campantar* refers to *Kaṇṇappar* worshipping with his mouth itself as the water pot, and the eye which he had scooped out as the flower.[8] In the 11th *Tirumuṟai,* we have two songs called '*Tiruk-kaṇṇappa tēvar tirumaṟam*', one by *Nakkīrar* otherwise known as *Nakkīratēva Nāyaṉār,* and the other by *Kallāṭar*. The very name '*maṟam*' suggests to us the age of 96 *prabhandas* which came into vogue when *Paṉṉirupāṭṭiyal* was composed probably in the *post-caṅkam* age. *Nakkīrar* describes the cruel aspect of a hunter's life with his body full of wounds received during his hunting expeditions. *Kaṇṇappar* went to worship with the water filled up in his mouth, flowers filled in his tuft of hair, carrying the bow in his hand ready for use and being followed by a dog. He mentions the *Brahmin* doing the *pūjā* according to *Āgamas* and feeling sore about the daily desecration by *Kaṇṇappar, Śiva* came in a dream of the *Brahmin* to praise the hunter's worship as being full of love. The next day *Kaṇṇappar* saw one of the eyes of the Lord bleeding and he scooped one of his eyes first to be placed on the bleeding eye. Overpowered by his joy at the stopping of blood, he began to scoop the other eye as well, when he saw the other eye also of the Lord begin to bleed, whereupon, God prevented him from doing so by catching hold of his hand. *Kallāṭar,* in his '*maṟam*' des-

5. 7:65:2.
6. 7:88:6.
7. 7:55:4.
8. 3:69:4.

cribes the various ornaments a hunter would wear. *Kaṇṇappar* performed the same kind of worship as described by *Nakkīrar*. Here, the name of the *Brahmin* is mentioned as *Kōcari*.[9] *Nakkīraṉar* will make *Kaṇṇappar* scoop out both his eyes for curing one of the Lord. *Kallāṭar* makes him first scoop out and place his eye on the right eye which alone was first bleeding and then scoop out the other eye, only when the hunter found the other eye also was bleeding. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* only speaks of *Kaṇṇappar* removing his eye to be placed on the Lord's eye when he found it bleeding.

The story of *Kaṇṇappar* had appealed to such great saints as *Māṇikkavācakar* and philosophers like *Śaṅkara*. *Cēkkiḻar* with these hints had made a beautiful story of *Kaṇṇappar's* mental development. He represents *Kaṇṇappar* as a beautiful person and makes him the very form of love which is usually born of true knowledge, thus interpreting in his story *Ārūrar's* reference to *Kaṇṇappar* as *"Kalaimalinta cīr Nampi"*. The name of the *Brahmin* is given in *Periyapurāṇam* as *Śivakōcariyār* (135). *Kaṇṇappar's* worship is reduced to the short span of six days (166). He does not describe the dog in detail but he refers to the foot prints of the dog in the speech of God in the dream of *Śivakōcariyār* (138). He follows *Kallāṭar* in making both the eyes of the Lord, bleed. In this story, unfettered and unconventional love is contrasted with the love and worship according to *Āgamas,* and the story emphasizes that the former is better than or as good as the latter. The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions will make *Kaṇṇappar* not only *'Nētrārpaka'*, what is merely a translation of the name *Kaṇṇappar,* but also a *'Mukkaṇṇa'*, for, it is said there that *Śiva* had given him three eyes.[10]

IV

The 11th saint is *Kuṅkiliyakkalaya Nāyaṉār,* whom the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions describe as *Kaṅkulināyaṉār* or *Gugguliya*. According to these traditions, he was too poor to purchase and burn the *'kuṅkiliya'* (incense) before *Śiva* and that he had to sell even the sacred necklace of his wife. In addition to this, *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* mentions that he straightened up the *Śivaliṅga* which had fallen down at *Tiruppanandāḷ*.[11] He gives *Kaṭa-*

9. *Kallāṭar-Maṟam,* 1.24.
10. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925, p. 7.
11. *'cāynta'* may mean either fallen or sloped-*Tiruṭ. Tiruvantāti-verse No. 12.*

vūr as the birth place of this saint following *Ārūrar* who says, "*Katavūril Kalayaṉṟaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Kalayaṉ* of *Kaṭavūr*'. In the story as given in *Periyapurāṇam,* this saint became rich after the sale of the sacred necklace (*tāli*) of his wife. *Śiva* told the saint's wife in a dream, of the riches. In *Cēkkiḻār's* story, the *Cōḻa* king of his times tried his best to straighten up the *liṅga* but failed in spite of the numerous elephants he used whilst the saint came there and straightened the *liṅga* with a rope attached to the *liṅga* and which passed round his neck also. *Campantar* and *Appar* according to *Periyapurāṇam* were his guests. The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions, as already mentioned, describe only the service of his burning the incense and perhaps this was the older tradition.

V

The 12th saint is *Māṉakkañcāṟar* and *Ārūrar* says of him as, "*Malai malinta tōḷ vaḷḷal Māṉakkañcāṟar*"—*Māṉakkañcāṟar,* who was a munificent person and who had shoulders as strong as hillocks. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* calls his place of birth as *'Kañcai',* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies as *Kañcāṟūr,* the modern *Āṉatāṇṭavapuram* (*Ānanda Tāṇḍavapuram*). This will suggest that the name of the saint was derived from his place of birth. *Kañcāṟaṉ* means the man of the city or village of *Kāñcāṟu*. *Māṉam* alone will remain as his proper name, if it is not a title emphasizing his sense of honour and we know people had been bearing the name of *Māṉa* as *Māṉavamma* and *Māṉi* the great *Maṅkaiyarkkaraci,* wife of *Neṭumāṟaṉ*. According to *Cēkkiḻār,* he belongs to the *Veḷḷāḷa* community. It is clear that *Cēkkiḻār* is making a clear distinction between the *Śūdra* community and the *Veḷḷāḷa* community. Most of those whom he refers as belonging to the *Veḷḷāḷa* community are found to be commanders under the ruling kings. Here also *Cēkkiḻār* says that *Māṉakkañcāṟar* was one such commanders. He had a daughter for whom marriage with *Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāmar* was arranged. On the day of the marriage came in a *Māvirata* ascetic to suggest that the flowing braid of the bride would be good for his *yajñōpavīta* of hair (*pañcavaṭi*). The saint readily cut away the braid of hair which re-appeared as of old by the Grace of God. *Ēyarkōṉ* is said to be a contemporary of *Ārūrar* and it is unfortunate we do not have any detailed reference to *Māṉakkañcāṟar* in his *hymns*. The name itself seems to suggest that the saint had a high sense of honour as probably befitting the great warrior or commander he was. The *Kannada* and

Sanskrit traditions describe him as a *Cōḻa king, Māṉakanjanadīsa.* Probably he was a chieftain of the part of the *Cōḻa* country full of love for *Śaivites.*

VI

The 13th saint is *Arivāṭṭāya Nāyaṉār.* *Ārūrar's* words are, "*Eñcāta vāḷ Tāyaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of the servants of the never decreasing *Vāḷ Tāyaṉ*'. One would ordinarily interpret the word '*vāḷ*' as sword and thus *Tāyaṉ* would appear a warrior chieftain, a patron of *Śaivism.* '*Vāḷ*' is however taken to mean the '*arivāḷ*' or the scythe, which, by its harvest, ever increases the wealth and happiness of a country as opposed to the sword which kills and reduces the number of living people. Or, '*eñcāta*' may be applied to *Tāyaṉ* himself when we will have to interpret the word *Tāyaṉ* as one who is like the mother unto all. It must have become a proper name. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* gives the native place of this saint as *Kaṇamaṅkalam,* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies with a village of that name in the *Cōḻa* country. According to *Periyapurāṇam,* the saint belongs to the *Vēḷāṉ* community. Whilst the saint was carrying the food for *Śiva,* it fell down and he not only swore that if the Lord did not partake of the food he would cut away his head but also proceeded to behead himself with his scythe. This is all that *Nampiyāṇṭār* has to say. *Cēkkiḻār* explains the full story in detail. The saint first undertook to feed the Lord with precious rice (*cennel*), red greens and tender mango. He sold away his land; he worked as a cooly later on for carrying out this undertaking. He had to live on leaves and then on water alone. It was because of this his wife and he fell down when they were carrying food and other articles of worship to the Lord. As usual with *Cēkkiḻār,* the wife of the saint is found to co-operate in the service of the Lord. Whilst he was trying to cut away his head, the saint heard the noise of *Śiva* eating of the mango and felt the Lord's hand preventing him from his suicide. The omnipresence of God, His receiving the worship at any place, and in the custom of offering of rice, herbs and mango are all brought out in this story. The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions give his name as '*Arivāḷ toṇḍa nāyaṉār*' or '*Saṅkulādāya*' which latter expression is simply a translation of '*arivāḷ*' (scythe) and a corruption of the name *Tāya.*

VII

The 14th saint is *Āṉāya Nāyaṉār.* *Ārūrar* sings, "*Alaimalinta puṉal maṅkai Āṉāyarkkaṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of the cow-

herd of *Maṅkai*, great for its waters full of waves or ripples'. *Āṉāyaṉ* means a cow-heard and it is translated into *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* as *Gōnātha*. They also give another name, *Chokkanāyaṉār*, which suggests that there must be a tradition that the saint's name was *Cokkaṉ*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* makes him a resident of *Puṉalmaṅkalam* of *Mēlmaḻanāṭu*, which *Cēkkiḻār* says is in *Nīrnāṭu* or *Cōḻa* country. *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him worship *Śiva* playing on his flute. *Cēkkiḻār* makes this saint, whilst grazing the cow, play the *'Pañcākṣara' mantra* on his flute, and brings out the importance of music in *Śaivism*.

CHAPTER III

MUMMAIYĀL ULAKĀṆṬA CARUKKAM

I

The third verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* starts with the phrase, "*Mummaiyāl ulakāṇṭa*" and the first saint described in this verse is *Mūrti Nāyaṉār*, the 15th saint in the list. *Ārūrar* sings: "*Mummaiyāl ulakāṇṭa Mūrttikkum aṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of *Mūrti*, who ruled the world with the three'. This makes it clear that the saint must have been a king. Saying that he would prefer death to conversion to *Jainism*, this saint rubbed away his elbow for preparing sandal paste for God and ruled thereafter the world from *Maturai*. This is all that *Nampiyāṇṭār* says about this saint. *Cēkkiḻār* gives greater details which throw some light on the dark period of the *Kalabhra interregnum* mentioned in the *Vēḷvikkuṭi* grant when the *Pāṇḍyas* ceased to rule at *Maturai*. *Mūrti*, a *Vaiśya*, belonging to the merchant community, used to offer sandal paste to the Lord. There was from the north an invasion of the city by the '*Vaṭuka Karunāṭaka* king' who was suffering from land hunger. The usurper was a *Jain* and persecuted the *Śaivites* so much that *Mūrti* found it impossible to get even a piece of sandal wood. He used his own elbow to rub on the sandal stone. The usurper died. The elephant sent out to pick up a king brought *Mūrti* on its head. '*Mummai*' or 'the three' with which *Mūrti* ruled the world are explained as the sacred ash, the *rudrākṣa*, and the matted hair. This shows a period of *Jain* and *Śaivite* opposition which was unknown in the days of *Cilappatikāram*. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions call him *Mūrtinātha* and *Ulaghāṇḍamūrti;* the latter name must have been taken from *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*. According to these traditions, he was a *Śaivite Brahmin* who drove away an *Andhra Buddhist* usurper from Madura to *Karnāṭa* country. *Buddhism* instead of *Jainism* opposes *Śaivism* in these traditions.

II

The 16th saint is *Muruka Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar* simply states, "*Murukaṉukkum* (*Uruttira Pacupatikkum*) *aṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of *Murukaṉ* (and *Uruttira Pacupati*).' *Ñāṉacampantar,*

in his *hymn* on *Pukalūr Varttamāṉēccuram* refers to this *Murukaṉ*.[1] He adorns the Lord of this temple and people seeing it become full of joy. *Śiva* is the Lord of those sweet smelling flowers which *Muruka* has placed on his crown adorning the Lord thrice a day.[2] According to *Periyapurāṇam* he disappeared with *Ñāṉacampantar* to attain salvation at the marriage of the latter being his friend and contemporary. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* refers to this friendship and to his adorning the God with flowers in addition to his uttering the *Pañcākṣara*. He was a *Brahmin*. He must have been an *archaka* in the *Varttamāṉēccuram* temple at *Pukalūr*. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions, in spite of the clear references in *Campantar's hymns* make him a *Śūdra Ṣaivite*.

III

The 17th saint is *Rudra Paśupati Nāyaṉār*. We had already referred to *Ārūrar's* reference to him along with *Muruka Nāyaṉār*, probably because both of them belong to this *Brahmin* community. The description itself suggests that his proper name was *Paśupati* and that he recited the *Śrī Rudram* of the *Yajur Vēda*, thereby showing that *Vēdic* worship had also become part of Ṣaivite worship. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* states that the saint was born at *Tiruttalaiyūr* which according to *Cēkkiḻār* is in the *Cōḻa* country. It is the recital of *Śrī Rudram* that is mentioned by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and *Cēkkiḻār* as the greatness of this saint. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as one who pleased *Śiva* with his sweet chanting of the *Rudra hymn*.

IV

The 18th saint is *Tirunāḷaippōvar Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar* sings, "*Cemmaiyē Tirunāḷaippōvārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of him who will go straight tomorrow'. This is the saint who was saying every day that he would go to *Tillai* (*Citamparam*) the next day. *Ārūrar* refers to this saint in another place[3] also, where he mentions him along with other saints whose faults *Śiva* has accepted as noble actions and where he states that this merciful act of God has inspired him to take refuge in God. Perhaps this saint's going into the temple was forbidden in those days because

1. 2:92:3 & 5.
2. 2:92:5.
3. 7:55:4.

he was an untouchable. *Nampiyāṇṭār* refers to this saint as a '*puṟattiruttoṇṭaṉ*'—'the *Śaivite* follower who was beyond the pale of the castes'. He also refers to his '*pulai*' (untouchability), that is, being a member of the untouchable community living on cow. By the Grace of God he became a '*muṉi*' (saint or sage). His native place was *Ātaṉūr*, which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies with the village of that name in *Mēṟkāṉāṭu*, in *Nīrnāṭu, i.e., Cōḻa* country, on the banks of *Koḷḷiṭam* (*Coleroon*). *Cēkkiḻār* makes him give hides for the drum and strings for '*vīṇā*' (*harp*) to the temples. At *Tiruppuṉkūr*, the Lord ordered *Nandi* to move aside so that this saint could have a direct view of the *liṅga*. The Lord intervened on his behalf to fulfil his desire of having a vision of the *Tillai* dance. The Lord appeared in a dream to *Tillai Mūvāyiravar* and they prepared a sacrificial fire into which the saint entered to come out as a purified '*muṉi*' to enter the hall of *Tillai* dance only to disappear into the '*ākāśa*'. If this story is true, *Ārūrar* will not be justified in saying, "*Nāḷaippōvāṉum....kuṟṟam ceyyiṉum kuṇameṉak karutum koḷkai kaṇṭu*" because he would not have committed any fault if he had entered the temple as a purified *muṉi*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* who states that the saint had become a *muṉi* does not mention anything about the entrance into the fire. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions call him '*Tirunāḷ pōpar*', '*Tirunāḷ vōvar*', which are all corruptions of the name *Tirunāḷaippōvār* and they also translate the name as '*Svōgantri*'. These traditions do not state anything beyond that this saint though a *chaṇḍāla*, pleased *Śiva* with his devotion. They give his proper name as *Nanda* which is also found mentioned in *Periyapurāṇam*.[3a] In the *Vaiṣṇavite* tradition *Kulacēkarāḻvār* who is said to have been always saying that he will be going and seeing *Ranganātha* (I will be going and seeing *Ranganātha* tomorrow). This idea of '*Tirunāḷaippōtal*' seems to have been popular in the world of *Bhaktas*. The sculptures on the southern wall of *Dārāsuram* represents the story of *Tirunāḷaippōvār* as preserved in *Periyapurāṇam*. On the right hand corner stands a person with a beard and a moustache and with the cloth tied round his waist reaching to his knees and his hands held in *añjali* pose. There is something like a pillar on his right hand side. This is probably *Nandaṉār* before he entered the sacrificial fire. To the right of this pillar we find the fire with its flames inside which appears

3a. *Tirunāḷai.*, 11.

Nandanār with the hands held in the *añjali* pose and with the beard, but in addition with a matted hair tied up in the form of a cone-like crown. The look in his face is serene as opposed to the look of humility visible on the figure which we had identified as *Nandanār* before purification. On the right side of the fire stand two men new and on the left one man, all standing with hands held in *añjali* pose probably representing the *Tillaimūvayiravar*.[4]

V

The 19th saint is *Tirukkuripputtoṇṭar*. *Ārūrar's* words are "*Tirukkuripputtoṇṭartam aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of the servants of him who serves knowing the mind of the Lord or the mind of the *Bhaktas*'. The word '*Tiru*' is used by *Ārūrar* with reference to *Tirunīlakaṇṭar, Tirunāḷaippōvār, Tirukkuripputtoṇṭar, Tirunāvukkaracar, Tirumūlar, Tirunīlakaṇṭattup pāṇar*, probably in praise of the idea conveyed by the word following it in all these names. *Cēkkiḻār* explains this word *Tirukkuripputtoṇṭar* as refering to this saint because he served the *Śaivite Bhaktas*, intuitively knowing their mind (v. 112). This must be one of the ideals of the *Śaivites* of that age. When we come to the story of this saint we find it represents a very restricted sphere of this kind of activity. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* states that this saint swore that if the rain did not stop so as to enable the clothes to be washed and dried, he would die dashing his head against a stone. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* makes him a resident of *Kacci* and a member of the *Ēkalaiyar* community or a washerman. According to *Cēkkiḻār* this saint undertook to wash the soiled garments of *Śaivites*, free. An old *Śaivite*, no other than God *Śiva* Himself came with a dirty rag which the saint offered to wash and return before sunset. A heavy downpour of rain prevented this promise being fulfilled, when the saint dashed his head against the stone on which he washed the clothes. The stories of *Nandanār*, *Āṉāyar* and *Tirukkuripputtoṇṭar* show that *Śaivism* was capturing the mind of the lowliest of the low and that *Śaivism promised Śiva's* Grace to all, irrespective of caste or service. The name of this saint is wrongly translated as *Vichārabhakta*, and wrongly written as *Tirukurutoṇḍanāyaṉār* in the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* works which state that the saint attempted to cut his own throat as against the *Tamiḻ* tradition that he dashed against

4. *A.R.E.*, 1919-20, *Pl.* 6, *fig.* 49.

the stone. The *Dārāsuram* temple has a sculpture representing this story. On the right side, we have probably a *Śaivite Bhakta* with a walking stick in the act of giving something probably a cloth. He is clothed from the hip to the heels. In front of him stands *Tirukkuripputtoṇṭar* carrying the cloth on his left shoulder. He is almost naked but for his loin cloth thus showing his inferior status. On the left hand, we find him standing and washing the cloth on a stone. On his right and above his head we find the heavy rains. On the right side of this representation of rain we find the saint dashing against the stone and we see a hand probably that of *Śiva* preventing this act.[5]

VI.

The 20th saint is *Caṇḍēśvara Nāyaṉār*: the name is also found in the forms *Caṇḍēśa* and *Taṇṭīca*. *Ārūrar* refers to him as *Caṇṭi* and some editions contain the form *Taṇṭi* also. *Caṇḍēśvara* plays an important part in the *Āgamic* worship where at the end of daily worship all the '*nirmālyas*' are offered to *Caṇḍēśvara*. The cult of *Caṇḍēśvara* with many forms and sometimes with his *Śakti* is found well developed in the *Āgamas* (*Kāmikāgama*). The receipt of the *nirmālya* is considered to be the peculiar characteristic feature of *Caṇḍēśapadam*. *Ñāṉacampantar* describes the story of this saint:[6]

"Vanta maṇalāl iliṅkam maṇṇiyiṉkaṇ pālāṭṭum
Cintai ceyvōṉ taṉ karumam tērntu citaippāṉ varum at
Tantaitaṉaic cāṭutalum caṇṭīcaṉ eṉṟaruḷik
Kontaṇavum malar koṭuttāṉ kōḷiliyem perumāṉē".

"He made *liṅga* of sand and poured milk over it. His mind was concentrated on it. Realizing this wasteful act, his father came to prevent it. The saint dashed against him. The Lord made him *Caṇṭīca* and gave him the bunch of flowers".

Māṇikkavācakar explains: *"Pātakamē cōṟu paṟṟiyavā tōṇōkkam"*[7] 'the sin itself had become the veritable nourishing food of enjoyment' — another illustration of the doctrine of Grace. The saint was so much concentrated that he had no other thought and removed the obstacle to his worship in the twinkling of an eye.

5. *A.R.E.*, 1919-20, *Pl.* 6, *fig.* 48.
6. 1:62:4.
7. *Tiruvācakam-Tiruttōṇokkam*, 7.

"I have come to separate, not to unite, to separate the father from the son", says Christ. It is this that has happened in the story of *Caṇḍēśvara*. *Ārūrar,* as already referred to, speaks to the Lord enjoying the faults of the saints like *Caṇḍi, Tirunāḷaippōvār, etc.*[8] To still further minimize the outward cruelty, *Cēkkiḻār* mentions that *Caṇḍēśvara* threw out only a stick lying nearby so as to become a battle-axe. *Ārūrar,* in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai,* describes *Caṇḍēśvara* in one half of a verse, an amount of space which he does not give to any other saint:

'Meymmaiyē tirumēṉi vaḻipaṭā niṟka
Vekuṇṭeḻunta tātaitāḷ maḻuviṉāl eṟinta
Ammaiyāṉ aṭiccaṇṭip perumāṉuk kaṭiyēṉ
Ārūraṉ Ārūril ammāṉuk kāḷē".[9]

"He was worshipping the sacred form, truly and sincerely whilst his father came upon him full of anger. *Caṇṭi,* the servant God, threw the axe at the leg of his father". *'Ammaiyāṉ'* may mean the wonderful person or the beautiful person or the Lord of the other world, *i.e.,* the *Caṇḍēśvarapada. Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* makes him a native of *Cēyñalūr* and a member of the highest community. According to him both the legs were cut off whilst *Caṇḍēśa* continued pouring the milk over the Lord and adorning him with flowers. *Cēkkiḻār* identifies this *Cēyñalūr* as the village on the southern bank of *'Maṇṇi',* a river in the *Cōḻa* country and tells us that this place was called *Cēyñalūr,* after *'Cēy' Subrahmaṇya.* It is one of the five cities where the *Cōḻas* used to be crowned.[10] It is a city of *Brahmins. Caṇḍēśvara* came of *Kaśyapa Gōtra* and a son of *Eccatatta* or *Yajñadatta,* the father and *Pavitra,* his mother. Even when he was young he could not bear the cow-herd beating a cow. He dismissed the cow-herd and took his place, taking the cows every day to the grazing ground. The loving hand of this saint increased the yield of milk. This spontaneous overflow of milk, even whilst the cows were grazing in the forest, the saint utilized for performing *liṅga* worship. The news was spread that he was wasting the milk and the father unable to bear the calumny on the good name of his family came to verify the report and found his son pouring the milk on a

8. 7:55:3 & 4.
9. 7:39:3.
10. *Caṇṭ.,* 8.

liṅga of sand. The saint's mind was all engrossed in the worship and he could not feel the beatings administered by his father. The enraged father dashed his leg against the pot of milk reserved for worship. This was an unpardonable sin and the saint could not excuse him though he was the father. He took up a stick lying nearby and threw it out as an axe to cut the legs which was the punishment he deserved. As though nothing had happened the saint was doing his *pūjā*.. God was so moved by the detached mind of the saint that he undertook to be the father thereafter and offered him the *Caṇḍēśapada* crowning him with the laurel of *'konrai'*, removed from His own crown. The father also became purified by the touch of the stick which the saint had held in his hand. The *Dārāsuram* Temple represents this story in one of its sculptures, inscribed under as *'Cēyñalūr Pilḷḷaiyār'* on its wall. On the right side, there is a man with the face in an angry mood throwing up his hands and dashing against something with his upraised leg. There are two cows showing that it is the grazing ground. In the middle of the picture we find a *Brahmin* boy with sacred thread holding up the axe in his right hand and catching hold of an old person with his hand. The leg of the old man is found cut. At the left hand corner of the picture *Śiva* and *Pārvati* are seated whilst *Śiva* adorns *Caṇḍēśvara* beneath him with His *konrai* laurel.[11]

In the *Cēyñalūr hymn, Campantar* refers to *Caṇṭīcar* in his interrogation: "O, Lord of *Cēyñalūr!* Why did you give the leadership with a garland to him who had cut away the leg of his father?"[12] Probably from this it was assumed that *Caṇṭīcar* belonged to *Cēyñalūr*. *Appar* gives more particulars about the kind of worship the saint had performed. The worship was performed under an *'ātti'* tree. In many places, *Appar* speaks of the saint milking the cow straightaway and bathing the Lord with the milk.[13] *Campantar* seems to suggest that *Caṇṭīcar* gathered the milk in a vessel,[14] which the father upset allowing the milk to be spilt.[15] But in another place, *Campantar* seems to suggest that the father's leg almost dashed against the crown of the *liṅga*—

11. *A.R.E.*, 1919-20, *Pl. VI*, *fig.* 47.
12. 1:48:7.
13. *Ap.*, 49:3; 73:5; 116:4.
14. 3:66:3.
15. 3:115:5.

"Muṭi cērnta kālai".[16] *Appar* also seems to make the same suggestion when he says, *"Tāparattaik kaṇṭu avaṉ tātai pāyvāṉ"*[17]—'Seeing the *liṅga* his father rushed up'. *Appar* states that *Caṇṭīca* worshipped not only with milk but also with ghee[18] and performed various kinds of worship and garlanded the Lord with *koṉṟai* flowers and that this, the father could not brook.[19] *Campantar* refers to *Caṇṭi* singing the *Vēdic hymns.*[20] The poems of these saints seem to suggest two different ideas. One is that *Caṇṭīca* was so much concentrated that he simply removed the obstruction without any further thought,[21] *i.e., "Pātam koṇṭu avaṉ kuṟippiṉālē"; "Cintai ceyvōṉ".*[22] The other is that the leg was cut away as a punishment — *"Piḻaitta taṉ tātai tāḷai"!*[23] *"Tiruvaṭikkaṭ piḻaippa".*[24] The leg was cut away with a *maḻu.*[25]

The *liṅga* was made by heaping up sands: *"Kūppiṉāṉ tāparattai";*[26] *"Maṇalāl kūppi";*[27] *"Maṇalaikkūppi";*[28] *"Maṇalāl iliṅkam paṇṇi";*[29] *"Veṇmaṇalē Śivamāka";*[30] *"Maṇal iliṅkam".*[31] It was *jñāna pūjā; "Bōdattāl vaḻipaṭṭāṉ"*[32] *"Koṇṭavaṉ kuṟippiṉāle".*[33] *Bhakti* also is emphasized.[34] *Caṇṭīśvara was* given food — *"Kuḷaittatōr amutamīntār";*[35] *"Pōṉakamum".*[36] He was also given the garland of *koṉṟai*: *"Koṉṟaimālait tāṉam".*[37] This is the laurel taken from the crown of the Lord —*"Taṉ mutimēl alarmālai".*[38]

16. 3:54:7.
17. 7:48:4.
18. 4:65:6.
19. 4:65:6.
20. 2:43:5.
21. *Ap.,* 4:48:4.
22. *Camp.,* 1:62:4.
23. *Ap.,* 4:49:3.
24. *Ap.,* 288:9.
25. *Ap.,* 49:3; 65:6; *Camp.,* 3:115:5.
26. *Ap.,* 48:4.
27. *Ap.,* 49:3.
28. *Ap.,* 73:5.
29. *Camp.,* 1:62:4.
30. *Camp.,* 2:43:5.
31. *Camp.,* 3:66:3.
32. *Camp.,* 2:43:5.
33. *Ap.,* 48:4.
34. *Ap.,* 73:5.
35. *Ap.,* 49:3.
36. *Camp.,* 1:106:6.
37. *Ap.,* 65:6.
38. *Ap.,* 231:10.

Campantar also mentions this gift of food and garland — "*Mālai-yum pōṉakamum*".[39] The garland was conferred as a symbol of rulership and the pre-eminent position *Caṇṭīśvara* was made to occupy — "*Mālai cūṭṭit talaimai vakuttu*";[40] "*Nīḷulakelām āḷak koṭuttu*".[41] This pre-eminent position or office is known by the name of *Caṇḍēśapada* and the saint was therefore called '*Caṇḍēśa*' — "*Caṇṭīcaṉ eṉṉao ciṟanta pēraḷittāṉ*",[42] "*Caṇṭīcaṉeṉṟaruḷi*".[43] This story is considered to have happened in olden days. For emphasizing the *Ārūr* temple as an ancient one, Appar raises the rhetorical interrogation, "Was the temple built when *Caṇṭi* was conferred with the garlands?"[44]

39. *Camp.*, 1:106:5.
40. *Camp.*, 1:48:7.
41. *Ap.*, 115:4.
42. *Ap.*, 73:5.
43. *Camp.*, 1:62:4.
44. *Ap.*, 247:10.

CHAPTER IV

I

TIRU NINRA CARUKKAM

The fourth verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the phrase "*Tiruniṉṟa cemmaiyē*" and the first saint described in this verse is *Tirunāvukkaracar,* the 21st saint in the list. "*Tiru niṉṟa cemmaiyē cemmaiyāk koṇṭa Tirunāvukkaraiyaṉṟaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"[1] are the words of *Nampi Ārūrar*. This line is based on *Tirunāvukkaracar's* own words: "*Śivaṉeṉum ōcaiyalla taṟaiyō ulakil tiru niṉṟa cemmaiyuḷatē.*"[2] *Ārūrar* says: "I am the servant of the servants of *Tirunāvukkaracar,* who had taken it as his justice, that justice where exists *Tiru*". '*Tiru* ordinarily means wealth; whilst worldly wealth is evanescent and ephemeral, the spiritual wealth is eternal and permanent. *Campantar* calls this, "*Ceṉṟaṭaiyāta tiru*".[3] *Tirunāvukkaracar* is said to have refused to follow the commands of the ruling monarch relying more upon God and His Grace.[4] *Tiru* also is taken in the sense of *Kaivalyam* or *Salvation* in *Ārūrar's Tēvāram,*[5] and in the inscription of the Eastern Archipelago. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* makes *Tirunāvukkaracar* a native of *Āmūr* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies as '*Āmūr*' in *Tirumuṉaippāṭināṭu. Periyapurāṇam* further describes him as the member of the *Kuṟukkai Vēḷāḷar. Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* refers to God placing his feet on the head of *Tirunāvukkaracar* and the latter eating the poisoned food and his acts of opening the gates of *Tirumaṟaikkāṭu* temple and to his floating on a stone. *Nampiyāṇṭār* refers to his sister,[6] but *Cēkkiḻār* explains in detail the story of his sister *Tilakavati* bringing him up and finally converting him to *Śaivism.* He also mentions about the persecution by the Pallava king, *Guṇabhara,* and narrates how he refused to obey the order of the *Pallava* and how he escaped the elephant and the lime-kiln. *Nampiyāṇṭār* speaks of the colic pain[7] which was cured after *Tirunāvuk-*

1. 7:39:4.
2. *Ap.,* 4:8:1.
3. *Camp.,* 1:97:1.
4. *Ap., H.,* 312.
5. 7:69:1.
6. *Ēkātacamālai,* 1.
7. *Ēkā.,* 1.

karacar became a *Śaivite*. He also speaks of this saint being saved at *Tiruvatikai*,[8] and the story of *Ūrvacī* and others failing to tempt *Tirunāvukkaracar*.[9] The *'uḻavārappaṭai'* (the hoe) is also referred to in the same verse. He also refers to *Tirunāvukkaracar* becoming converted to the right path at the instance of his sister who had conquered her passions.[10] *Cēkkiḻār* describes further *Appar's pilgrimage* to *Kailās* and his return to see the vision of *Kailās* as directed by the God at *Tiruvaiyāṟu*, basing this conclusion on the *Aiyāṟu hymn*. He also refers to the meeting of *Appar* and *Campantar*, of *Appar* and *Appūti*, basing on the references to the *hymns* of *Appar*. He describes how *Appar* got *'paṭikkācu'* (coins) at *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai*, basing on *Ārūrar's hymns*. He describes the special vision at *Vāymūr* and his *satyāgraha* at *Paḻaiyāṟai* for restoring the *Śaiva* temple, basing on tradition he must have heard. God feeding *Appar* on his way to *Tiruppaiññīli*, *Appar* throwing away the gems into the tank without falling into temptation and his final salvation on the *Cataiyam* day on one *Cittirai* month are all narrated according to the tradition of *Cēkkiḻār's* days. The story of *Appar* bringing to life the son of *Appūti* is not referred to by *Appar* himself though he mentions the name of *Appūti*.

Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi mentions that *Appar* has sung 700 *patikams*.[11] In another place[12] he mentions that he has sung *'ēḻ eḻunūṟu'* which is probably based on what *Ārūrar* has sung in his 65th *hymn*, verse 2 — *"Iṉaikoḷ eḻ eḻūnūṟu irumpaṉuval iṉṟavaṉ Tirunāviṉukkaraiyaṉ"*.

Paṭṭiṉattār refers to the three *Tēvāram* saints as *"Vittakap pāṭal muttiṟattaṭiyār"*.[13] He suggests[14] that *Tirunāvukkaracar* had crossed the waters with the help of a rock as a float and he asks the Lord, 'Is there anyone else who has done so?' Sometimes, it is asked whether *Paṭṭiṉattār* would have sung like this if the story of *Appar's* floating on a rock had not been popular in his days but what *Paṭṭiṉattār* is referring to is the crossing of the sea of *Saṁsāra* with the help of the dangerous boat of his own

8. *Ēkā.*, 7.
9. *Ēkā.*, 2.
10. *Ēkā.*, 1.
11. *Ēkā.*, 3.
12. *v.*, 7.
13. *Tiruviṭai.*, *Mum.*, 28:30.
14. *Ibid.*, 4:29.

dangerous body. Though everybody is engaged in this adventure his own danger is more than what others face; the tradition about *Tirunāvukkaracar* has been growing and in the *Tiruppukalūr Purāṇam,* we read that the Lord appeared in the form of a lion and swallowed him so as to give him salvation. This is based on *Tirunāvukkaracar* addressing the Lord, "*Caṅkai oṉṟiṉṟiyē tēvar vēṇṭac camuttirattiṉ naṉcuṇṭu cāvā mūvāc ciṅkamē uṉṉaṭikkē pōtukkiṉṟēṉ Tiruppukaḻūr mēviya tēvatēvē.*"[15] This is a fair sample of the way in which traditions grow.

The story of the Lord supplying a gold (coin) every day to each one of the two great saints *Campantar* and *Appar* from the temple treasury of *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai,* when the saints stayed during a great famine is referred to by *Ārūrar* in *hymn* 46: 5, 7 and in the 88th *hymn,* verse 8. *Ārūrar* also speaks of the life of *Appar* showing him the way of God's Grace looking upon the faults of his servants as good qualities. Perhaps the fault of *Appar* was his going astray from the path of *Śaivism* before he became reconverted as a *Śaivite. Ārūrar* is laying the emphasis on the beautiful *Tamiḻ* verses sung by the saint in which he feels the Lord Himself reveals.[16]

The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of *Tirunāvukkaracar* as *Appar, Vāgīśa* or *Dharmasēna.* According to them, he was a *Brahmin* who wrote a number of learned works on *Jainism.* It is said that he got rid of colic pain through *Śaivite* charms and the use of ashes. He is said to have composed a number of songs both in *Sanskrit* and *Tamiḻ* in praise of *Śiva* and to have accompanied *Campantar* to *Madura* to reconvert King *Kubjapāṇḍya.*[17]

II

The 22nd saint is *Kulacciṟai Nāyaṉār. Nampi Ārūrar* sings, "*Perunampi Kulaciṟaitaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"[18] — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Kulacciṟai,* the *Perunampi*'. *Kulacciṟai* was the prime minister of *Kūṉ Pāṇṭyiaṉ,* who along with the *Pāṇḍya* Queen invited *Campantar* to *Madura. Campantar* praises him and the *Pāṇḍya* Queen, alternately in the Tiruvālavāy *hymn.*[19] *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi makes* him a native of

15. *Ap.,* 312:2.
16. 7:67:5.
17. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925.
18. 7:39:4.
19. 3:120:1-11.

Maṇamērkuṭi which *Cēkkilār* identifies with a place of that name in the *Pāṇḍya* country and also makes him responsible for the impaling of the *Jains* following the version of *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi.*[20] It is not clear on what basis *Nampiyāṇṭār* speaks of this kind of persecution. Though impaling persons for offences is found in sculptures of the age, it is very doubtful whether this was ever used by way of religious persecution. What must have been in the mind *Ārūrar* should be the reference to this great patron of *Śaivism* in the *hymns* of *Campantar.* The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Kulabaraināyaṉār* or *Kulapaksha.*[21]

III

The 23rd saint is *Perumilalaikkuṟumpa Nāyaṉār,* and the words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Perumilalaik kuṟumparkkum (Pēyārkkum) aṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of *Perumilalaikkuṟumpar.'* The name itself shows that he was a native of *Perumilalai,* which, *Cēkkilār* identifies with the name of that place in *Milalai Nāṭu,* as distinguished from *Veṇṇi Nāṭṭu Milalai,* referred to by *Ārūrar* in his *Nāṭṭuttokai hymn.*[22] There is an image of this saint in the temple in his village near *Kumpakōṇam. Nampiyāṇṭār* states that when this saint knew *Ārūrar* would reach *Kailās* on the next day, he, with the Grace of *Śiva,* left his body, to worship *Ārūrar* at *Kailās. Cēkkilār* further describes how this saint was worshipping all through his life *Ārūrar* alone, thereby becoming a great *yōgi.* The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Mithiladvija.* The name *Milalai* has been *sanskritized* into *Mithilā.*[23] He was a *Śaivite Brahmin* who is said to have departed to *Kailās* just a minute before *Sundara* did.[24]

IV

The 24th saint is *Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār. Ārūrar* speaks of her as *'Pēy'. Appar* seems to be referring to this saint when he sings of the Lord, *"Pēyttolilāṭṭiyaip peṟṟuṭaiyīr".*[25] *Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār* speaks of herself, *"Pēyāya naṟkaṇattil oṉṟāya nām".*[26]

20. *Tiruṭ. Tiruvan.,* 26.
21. *Mys. A. R.,* 1925.
22. 7:12:5.
23. *Mys. A.R.,* 1925.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ap.,* 96:4.
26. *Arputa.,* 86.

She speaks of herself as residing in the burning ghat, "*Kāṭumalinta kaṉalvāy eyiṟṟuk Kāraikkāl Pēy*",[27] but all this is mystic language, for it is clear from *Aṟputattiruvantāti* (16) that she had the experience of the Absolute.

In this connection, what *Nārada Bhakti sūtra* (63) describes of the *Bhakta* who has attained self-realization as '*Matta*' is significant. The *Bhakta* is often spoken as a honey-bee and *Ātman* is spoken of as honey. The Sufis compare the realization to wine whilst the Christians use the wine; the *Vēdas* speak of '*Sōma rasa*' and the *Śāktas* utilize intoxicating liquor in their rituals as a symbol of Divine experience. The *Bhaktas* become transformed under this new experience and their ways seem as inexplicable as that of mad men; for they have no will of their own; they are moved by the inner force. "Birds become his little sisters, a wolf a brother" (St. Francis of Assisi). "If men were drunk with the love of God, they ought to dance like mad men in the streets"—sings *Nammāḻvār*. To Plato this is 'Saving madness'. To the Christian mystics this is a draught of that wine of Absolute Life which runs in the arteries of the world. Emerson points out that a tending to insanity is always attended by the opening of the religious sense in man as if he was blasted with excessive light.

Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār is the author of *Tiruvālaṅkāṭṭu Mūtta Tiruppatikam, Tiruvālaṅkāṭṭut-tiruppatikam, Tiruviraṭṭai maṇimālai* and *Aṟputattiruvantāti*. In the work last mentioned, who speaks of her love for *Śiva* ever since she began to speak (v. 1). In the last verse (101), she calls herself a *Kāraikkāl Pēy*.

We know from references in *Tiruvācakam* and *Nālāyirappirapantam*, the prevalence of the name among saints like *Kāraikkāl Pēy* and *Pēyāḻvār*. "*Cakam pēyeṉṟu tammaicciriippa*";[28] "*Pēyaṉē everkkum yāṉumē*"—*Kulaśēkhara āḻvār*. It is said some saints had been misunderstood as mad people while the saints themselves were glad they were so abused. *Nampiyāṇṭār* refers only to her going to *Kailās* walking on her head, making *Pārvatī* laugh when *Śiva* endearingly called her, 'Mother'. The story of her getting a mango from God is not referred to by him. *Cēkkiḻār* makes her the daughter of a *Vaiśya* chief *Taṉatattaṉ* and the wife of *Paramatattaṉ*, who left her to marry another woman in the

27. *Tirup.*, 3:11.
28. *Tiruva.*, *Pōṟṟit.*, *l.* 68.

Pāṇḍya country and to name his child after the name of his first wife. According to *Cēkkiḻār, Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār's* name was *Puṉitavati* and she after the desertion by her husband threw out her flesh to assume the form of a *'pēy'*. After composing *Arputattiruvantāti, Irattaimaṇimālai,* she went to *Kailās* walking on her head and prayed to the Lord that she might be always under the dancing feet there after praising them in her *Tamiḻ* verses, *viz., Mūtta Tiruppatikam* and *Tiruppatikam. Cēkkiḻār* lays much emphasis on the name of *'Ammai'* because *Śiva* himself addressed her as such. It is rather surprising that *Ārūrar* does not refer to her as *Ammai.* He has chosen to refer to her as *Pēy* because she was calling herself *Pēy* in her work. *Ārūrar,* therefore, may be taken to lay emphasis on her works which reveal her mystic vision of the Lord and her sublime philosophy. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of her as *Kārikālammeyār* or *Pūtavati* and know only of her making many out of two mango fruits which her husband gave her.

V

The 25th saint is *Appūtiyaṭikaḷ. Ārūrar* sings, *"Orunampi Appūti aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ". Appar* praises *Śiva's* feet as the flower on the crown of *Appūti, "Añcippōyk kalimeliya aḻalōmpum Appūti Kuñcippūvāy niṉṟa cēvaṭiyāy".*[29] He also speaks here of *Appūti* worshipping the fire of sacrifice, *"Aḻalōmpum Appūti",*[30] thus making it clear that *Appūti* was a *Brahmin.* This reference to *Āppūti* in *Appar's hymn* must have been in the mind of *Ārūrar. Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him a native of *Tiṅkaḷūr* which *Cēkkiḻar* points out is next to *Tiruppaḻaṉam* in singing of which[31] *Appar* refers to *Āppūti.* According to *Nampiyāṇṭār, Appūti* was a great devotee of *Tirunāvukkaracar,* naming even his charitable water-shed, after this great saint. Nothing more is known from *Nampiyāṇṭār's* works. *Cēkkiḻār,* however, describes how *Tirunāvukkaracar* was surprised to know that *Appūti* had named his children, his charities, his cattle, weights and measures after *Tirunāvukkaracar.* He was invited by *Appūti* to dine at his house. One of his sons whilst cutting a plantain leaf for *Appar* was bitten by a serpent and died. Hiding the corpse in a corner, *Appūti* and his wife prepared to feed the saint but the latter asked for the son when

29. *Ap.,* 12:10.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Tiruppaḻaṉam-H.,* 12.

the truth had to be told. The saint sang the *hymn*, "*Oṉṟukolām*"[32] and brought the dead boy to life. That particular *hymn* unfortunately does not contain any specific reference which might suggest this miracle, though by the time of *Cēkkiḻār* this must have become a popular tradition. As *Nāmpiyāṇṭār* does not mention this miracle *Ārūrar* also could not have known this. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions calling *Appūti Nāyaṉār* as *Appadināyaṉār* or *Tadbhakti*, mention that he, in his admiration of *Vāgīśa*, called his sons, cows and even inanimate objects of his household after the name of *Vāgīśa*. It has to be noted that here no mention is made of the miracle. In the name *Appūti*, '*A*' is only a demonstrative prefix of the noun '*Pūti*' (of that great renown) and the inscriptions give a number of people who had this name *Pūti*. The wife of *Kannaradēva* was *Pūti Mātēvaṭikaḷ*.[33]

VI

The 26th saint is *Tirunīlanakka Nāyaṉār* and *Ārūrar's* words are, "*Olipuṉal cūḻ Cāttamaṅkai Nīlanakkark kaṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Nīlanakkar* of *Cāttamaṅkai* surrounded by the resounding waters'. In the *Cāttamaṅkai hymn, Campantar* refers to this saint as *Nakkaṉ*[34] and *Nīlanakkaṉ*.[35] He speaks of *Cāttamaṅkai* as the place which the *Śaivites* speak of as the city of *Nīlanakkaṉ* full of mental control — "*Niṟaiyiṉār Nīlanakkaṉ neṭumānakar eṉṟu toṇṭar aṟaiyumūr Cāttamaṅkai*".[35a] In another verse,[36] he speaks of *Nakkaṉ* worshipping at the temple (*parava*). *Cēkkiḻār* gives a detailed version of the story of this saint. Whilst he was one day concentrating his mind on God, a spider fell on the *liṅga* and his wife blew it out with her mouth. *Nīlanakkar* thought that she had committed a sacrilege as though spitting on the *liṅga* and told his wife that he could not any longer live with her. That night in the dream of *Nīlanakkar, Śiva* appeared and showed that the whole form of the Lord was full of the boils as the result of the infection by the spider except in the portion blown on by the lady. The next morning *Nakkar* brought back his wife to his house. *Campantar* came to *Cāttamaṅkai* to worship the Lord

32. *Ap., H.*, 18.
33. 356/1903.
34. 3:58:2.
35. 3:58:11.
35a. 3:58:11.
36. 3:58:2.

along with the *Pāṇar* and his wife. When *Nīlanakkar* invited him to his, *Campantar* requested him to give a place to rest for the *Pāṇa* couple and *Nīlanakkar* placed them in the room of the sacrificial fire. In the end, he disappeared with *Campantar* on the occasion of the latter's marriage. *Nampiyāṇṭār* mentions only the spider incident but not that of the *Pāṇa.* But the *Pāṇa* episode emphasizes the fact that the *Śaivites* did not swear by the caste regulations or believe in untouchability. The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions give us the *Sanskrit* form of the name, *viz.*, *Nīlanagna,* and state that he was persuaded not to abandon his wife for what he considered her of removing with her tongue the fibre of a spider from a *liṅga*-image of *Śiva.*

VII

The 27th saint is (*Nanti*) *Naminanti,* and *Ārūrar's* words are, "*Arunampi Naminanti aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*". The description '*Arunampi*' shows that he is an important saint. *Tirunāvukkaracar* himself calls him *Nampinanti,* whom he describes :

"Ārāin taṭittoṇṭar āṇipponārūr akattaṭakkip
Pārūr parippattam paṅkuṉi uttiram pārpatuttāṉ
Nampinanti
Nīrāl tiruviḷak kiṭṭamai nīḷnā ṭariyumaṉṟē".[37]

This description is praised by *Cēkkiḻār* himself. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions summarize the main event of his life as consisting in lighting the lamp with water for oil in response to the mocking reply, 'light the lamp with water before your *Śiva*', given by the *Jainas* when he begged of them for some oil for light. His name is found in them as *Nēminandi.*

But *Appar* always speaks of him as *Nanti.*[38] The same version of the story is given by *Nampiyāṇṭār* who makes the saint a native of *Ēmappērūr,* which according to *Cēkkiḻār* is in the *Cōḻa* country. The miracle, however, even according to *Nampiyāṇṭār* takes place only at *Tiruvārūr.* *Cēkkiḻār* makes him a contemporary of *Taṇṭi.*[39] He gives further details about the story of *Naminanti,* probably based on the verse of *Appar* mentioning *Paṅkuṉi Uttiram.* *Naminanti* went along with the crowd in the procession of the Lord of *Tiruvārūr.* On his return when his wife requested him to offer

37. *Ap.,* 103:2.
38. *Ap.,* 103:2, 4 & 6.
39. *Nami., Pur.,* 18.

the worship at the sacrificial fire before having his supper, he said that he had to bathe and cleanse himself because he had touched all and sundry, coming in the crowd. He ordered his wife to bring water for the bath. In the meanwhile he fell asleep overcome by fatigue. In the dream that arose the Lord showed him that all the people of *Ārūr* were *Śivagaṇas*. He woke up and repented for having considered himself impure. Though this episode is not mentioned anywhere else in the previous literature, this brings out once again that *Śaivism* did not care for rules of untouchability. The *Dārāsuram* sculptures are found to represent the story of his lighting the lamp with water. In the right half of the sculpture we find *Naminanti* drawing water in a pot from a pond. In the other half we see a temple with a *vimāna* in front of which we find a pillar-like lamp-stand with a series of lights placed one above the other which *Naminanti* is in the act of lighting after pouring probably the water carried from the pond.[40]

The name *Nanti* (*Nandi*) has become of immense significance after *Tirumantiram*, even as the other word *Nāta* (*Nātha*). They seem to imply a special line of *yōgic* saints or *siddhas* and the description of *Naminanti* by *Campantar* becomes, therefore, full of meaning: *"Āvitaṉil añcoṭukki aṅkaṇaṉ eṉṟu ātarikkum nāviyal cīr Naminantiyaṭikaḷ"*.[41] The five senses were controlled spiritually and the real spirit or the soul of souls was loved and revered as *Śiva* Himself. That was the great saint *Naminanti* (*Naminandi*) whose tongue also moved with glory.

40. *A.R.E.*, 1919-20, *Pl. VI, fig.* 46.
41. *Camp.*, 1:62:6.

VAMPAṞĀ VARI VAṆṬU CARUKKAM

I

The beginning of the fifth verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* is "*Vampaṟā vari vaṇṭu*" which has become the name of the fifth *carukkam*, in *Cēkkiḻār's Periyapurāṇam,* where the lives of the saints mentioned in that verse are described. The first saint in this verse is the 28th saint in the list, *Tiru Ñāṉacampanta cuvāmikaḷ.* The words of *Ārūrar* are:

> "*Vampaṟā varivaṇṭu maṇanāṟa malarum*
> *matumalarnaṟ koṉṟaiyāṉ aṭiyalāṟ pēṇā*
> *Empirāṉ Campantaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*".[1]

"I am the servant of the servants of my Lord *Campantar* who does not love anything except the feet of the Lord of the beautiful *koṉṟai* flowers full of honey blossoming and bestowing fragrance and the banded bees never leaving these fresh flowers". The phrase '*Empirāṉ Campantar*' as contrasted with '*Nampirāṉ Tirumūlaṉ*',[2] seems to suggest that *Ārūrar* thinks of *Campantar* as the leader of his school of thought, believing in singing *hymns* in praise of God. "*Nallicai Ñāṉacampantaṉum Nāviṉukkaracarum pāṭiya naṟṟamiḻ mālai colliyavē colli ēttukappāṉ*"[3] seems to suggest this conclusion. "*Nāḷum iṉṉicaiyāl tamiḻ parappum Ñāṉacampantaṉukku ulakavarmuṉ tāḷam īntu avaṉ pāṭalukku iraṅkum taṉmaiyāḷaṉ*":[4] *Ārūrar* here speaks of *Ñāṉacampantar* popularizing *Tamiḻ* through his music. God according to *Ārūrar* was so pleased that in the presence of the people of the world, He gave him the cymbals. In another place also he refers to God recognizing the great service of these two saints *Campantar* and *Appar* offering coins to them: "*Tirumiḻalai iruntum nīr tamiḻōṭicai kēṭkum iccaiyāl kācu nittam nalkiṉīr*".[5] *Ārūrar* speaks of *Ñāṉacampantar* being blessed with '*ñāṉam*' by the Lord at *Kāḻi*.[6]

1. 7: 39: 5.
2. 7: 39: 5.
3. 7: 67: 5.
4. 7: 62: 8.
5. 7: 88: 8.
6. 7: 97: 9.

Ārūrar speaks of *Campantar* as *Kaḻumalavūrar* and speaks of him as receiving a thousand gold from the Lord: *"Kaḻumala ūrarkku ampoṉ āyiram koṭuppar pōlum"*.[7] He describes *Ñāṉacampantar* as the Lord of words full of music or a great composer of music — *"Paṇmalinta moḻiyavar"*.[8] He speaks of himself worshipping the Lord along with this great composer and going with him following the Lord — *"Paṇmalinta moḻiyavarum yāṉum ellām paṇintiṟaiñcit tammuṭaiya piṉpiṉ cella"*.[9] There is a tradition that the gates of *Tirumaṟaikkāṭu* closed by the *Vēdas* were opened by *Appar* and again closed by *Ñāṉacampantar. Appar* in his *hymn* on *Tiruvāymūr*[10] refers to this incident and states that the person who closed the door was of greater firmness than himself who had sung for opening the gates and that this person was also standing there before the Lord worshipping Him:

'Tiṟakkap pāṭiya eṉṉiṉum centamiḻ
Uṟaikkap (*uṟaippup?*) *pāṭi aṭaippittā runniṉṟār*
Maṟaikka vallarō tammait tiruvāymūrp
Piṟaikkoḷ ceñcaṭai yārivar pittarē".[11]

Ñāṉacampantar himself refers to some of the events of his life: He states that the Lord had created an illusion and made him who could never forget the fact of the Lord, to be born on this earth — *"Tiruntaṭi maṟakkumāṟilāta eṉṉai maiyal ceytu immaṇṇiṉmēl piṟakkumāṟu kāṭṭiṉāy"*.[12] He further states that he continues in the old state — *"Toṉmaittaṉmaiyuḷ Ñāṉacampantaṉ"*.[13] He calls himself as one full of wisdom which is the lustre of the Lord — *"Taṉṉoḷi mikkuyarnta tamiḻ Ñāṉacampantaṉ"*.[14] He describes himself as one who has fulfilled the wish of the Lord — *"Kāḻiyarkōṉ karuttārvitta Ñāṉacampantaṉ"*[15] and as one who spreads the goodness of the Lord — *"Paracutaru pāṇiyai nalantikaḻcey tōṇipura nātaṉ"*.[16] He assures us that he has become com-

7. *Ap.*, 56: 1.
8. *Ap.*, 272: 1.
9. *Ap.*, 272: 1.
10. *H.*, 164.
11. *Ap.*, 164: 8.
12. 2: 98: 5.
13. 1: 101: 11.
14. 1: 108: 11.
15. 2: 16: 11.
16. 3: 83: 11.

pletely submerged in the Lord that he has no qualities of his own — *"Taṉṉiyal pillāc Caṉpaiyarkōṉ"*.[17] He states that the Lord of *Kāḻi* was his own *guru* — *"Vittakarākiya veṅkuruvē"*[18] who had purchased for a price certified by a sale deed .[19] The Lord, he sings, has removed his old *karmas* — *"Viṉaikaḷ paṟaiya"*;[20] his blot and deceit — *"Kaḷḷamārntu kaḻiyappaḻi tīrtta"*,[21] — his poverty and misery — *"Nalkuraveṉṉai nīkkum āviyar antaṇar allal tīrkkum appaṉār"*;[22] his fetters — *"Pāca valviṉai tīrtta paṇpiṉaṉ"*;[23] his old age—*"Narai tirai keṭutakavatu aruḷiṉaṉ"*;[24] and his birth—*"Piṟappeṉṉai aṟukkavallār"*.[25] He has himself stated that he has realized God —*'Uṇar'*[26] and knows the method — *"Perumāṉ akalam aṟiyalākāp paravum muṟaiyē payilum"*.[27] Seeing the miseries of the world, his mind loved the name of the Lord — *"Vētaṉai nōy naliyak kaṇṭu kaṇṭē uṉṟaṉ nāmam kātalikkiṉṟatu uḷḷam"*.[28] It is curious that in this verse *Campantar* speaks of his past inability to live separated from his wife, children and relatives. He has known probably the *yōgic* way which *Bhīṣma* has known of leaving this body whenever he liked — *"Piṇippaṭum uṭampu viṭṭu iṟakkumāṟu kāṭṭiṉāy"*.[29] Apart from this path of *jñāṉa* and *Yōga*, he practised performing various services — *"Em paṇiyāyavaṉ"*; *"Icaintavā ceya viruppaṉē"*;[30] *"Pālaṉāya toṇṭu"*.[31]

He states he sang to save the world from the *malas* or blots — *"Iḻuku malam aḻiyum vakai kaḻuvumuṟai"*.[32] He followed the *Vēdic* path and his *Tamiḻ* verses according to him are full of the *Vēdic* truths — *"Maṟaimali Tamiḻ"*.[33] The Lord, he sings, saved him when the heretics were speaking scandals of *Śaivism* — *"Ama-*

17. 1: 97: 1.
18. 3: 113: 4.
19. 1: 116: 3; 2: 23: 2, 8; 3: 6: 3.
20. 2: 93: 4.
21. 1: 2: 7.
22. 1: 8: 4.
23. 2: 25: 3.
24. 1: 123: 6.
25. 1: 8: 5.
26. 1: 1: 11; 1: 11: 11; 2: 7: 11; 2: 18: 11; 2: 72: 11; 2: 87:11, [illegible] 53: 11.
27. 2: 80: 11.
28. 1: 50: 3.
29. 2: 98: 5.
30. 3: 116: 11.
31. 3: 52: 5.
32. 3: 67: 12.
33. 1: 24: 11.

ṉar kuṇṭar cākkīyar tolaiyātaṅ kalar tūṟṟat tōṟṟaṅkāṭṭiyāṭkoṇṭīr."[34] He states he conducted a debate with the *Jains* and won a victory over them — "*Amaṇar...añca vātil aruḷ ceyya*",[35] after knowing the will of the Lord and for spreading *Śiva's* greatness all through the world — "*Vātil veṉṟaḻikkat tiruvuḷḷamē...nāḷum niṉ pukaḻē mikavēṇṭum*".[36] He states in one verse that because the *hymn* refers to the Mother Goddess, it will not be burnt when thrown into the fire — "*Eriyiṉil iṭilivai paḻutilai meymmaiyē*";[37] "*Koṟṟavaṉ etiriṭai eriyiṉiliṭa ivai kūṟiya col teri orupatu.*"[38] These are references to the song going through the ordeal of fire. He refers to the songs going through the ordeal of water and the palmyra leaf on which the song was written running against the current and reaching the shore at *Ēṭakam* — "*Paru matil Maturai maṉ avai etirē patikama teḻutilai yavai etirē varunati yiṭai micai varukaraṉē vacaiyoṭu malar keṭa varukaraṉē*";[39] "*Teṟṟeṉṟu teyvam teḷiyār karaik kōlai teṉṉīrp paṟṟiṉṟip pāṅku etirviṉ ūravum paṇpu nōkkil peṟṟoṉ ṟuyartta perumāṉ perumāṉum aṉṟē*";[40] "*Vaikai nīr ēṭu ceṉṟu aṇaitarum ēṭakam*".[41] The tradition tells us that the *hymn* that performed this feat is that which begins with "*Vāḻka antaṇar*"[42] and *Campantar* speaks of this in the last verse of that *hymn* — "*Pallārkaḷum matikkap pācuram coṉṉa pattu.*"[43] When the heretics set fire to his *mutt*, be prayed to the Lord to give him a fearless heart — "*Taṉcameṉṟuṉ caraṉ pukuntēṉaiyum añcaleṉṟaruḷ Ālavāy aṇṇalē*"[44] and directed the fire to reach the *Pāṇḍya* so that he might suffer from the fever in a manner acceptable to the world — "*Amaṇar koḷuvum cuṭar...Pāṇṭiyāṟkākavē*";[45] "*Ālavāyāti aruḷiṉāl veppam teṉṉavaṉ mēluṟa mētiṉikku oppa Ñāṉacampantaṉ urai pattu*".[46] *Pāṇḍya* was cured later on, thanks to the *hymn* on the sacred ashes — "*Ālavāyāṉ tirunīṟṟaip pōṟṟi....Ñāṉacampantaṉ tēṟṟit Teṉṉaṉ uṭaluṟṟa tīppiṇiyāyiṉa tīrac cāṟṟiya pāṭalkaḷ*

34. 2: 55: 10.
35. 3: 116: 10.
36. 3: 108: 1.
37. 3: 87: 1.
38. 3: 87: 11.
39. 3: 113: 12.
40. 3: 54: 11.
41. 3: 32: 11.
42. 3: 54: 1.
43. 3: 54: 12.
44. 3: 51: 6.
45. 3: 51: 8.
46. 3: 51: 11.

pattu",[47] and the *Pāṇḍya* Queen was prevented from becoming a widow on account of the Grace of the Lord, the Grace so near to the followers — "*Mikka Teṉṉavaṉ tēvikku aṇiyaiyē mella nalkiya toṇṭarkku aṇiyaiyē*".[48]

Apart from these debates with the *Jains, Campantar* seems to have suffered at the hands of both the Jains and the *Buddhists* and he speaks of the Lord helping him in these trying situations — "*Kaliyiṉ vallamaṉum karuñ cākkiyappēykaḷum naliyum nāḷketuṭ tāṇṭa eṉ nātaṉār*".[49] The tradition speaks of a debate with a *Buddhist* whose head was miraculously cut off and the line "*Viḷaṅku oḷi tikaḻtaru veṅkuru mēviṉaṉ*"[50] is pointed out as referring to this event. This speaks of the Lord sending a brilliant and resounding thunder but there is no clear and specific reference to the debate in this verse. The incident about the closing down of the gates of *Tirumaṟaikkāṭu* is referred to by *Campantar* himself: "*Itu naṉkiṟai vaittaruḷ ceyka eṉakku uṉ kaṭavam tirukkāppuk koḷḷum karuttālē*".[51]

We had referred to the verse of *Appar* referring to *Ñāṉacampantar* also worshipping with him. Some experience seems to have occurred to both these saints at that place and *Campantar* speaks of a dream, a deceitful form of the Lord, of His frightening him and some passing misery — "*Veruva vantiṭar ceyta vikirtaṉār*";[52] "*Kaṉavil tuyar ceytu*";[53] "*Vañcaṉai vaṭiviṉoṭu*".[54] *Ārūrar* had referred to *Campantar* getting coins[55] and *Campantar's hymn* "*Vāci tīravē kācu nalkuvīr*" refers to *Campantar's* prayers.[56]

The tradition speaks of *Ñāṉacampantar* drinking the milk of the Mother Goddess and *Campantar's hymn*, "*Pōtaiyār poṟkiṇṇat taṭicil pollāteṉat tātaiyār muṉivuṟat tāṉeṉai āṇṭavaṉ*"[57] is interpreted as referring to this incident, that one day his father took this child along with him, to bathe, that when the father was in-

47. 2: 66: 11.
48. 3: 115: 6.
49. 2: 9: 10.
50. 1: 127: 4.
51. 2: 37: 1.
52. 2: 111: 4.
53. 2: 11: 9.
54. 2: 111: 5.
55. 7: 88: 8.
56. 1: 91: 1.
57. 3: 24: 2.

side the water the child became alarmed and that the child began to weep so that the Lord ordered the Mother Goddess to offer it milk in a golden vessel which was looking like a lotus bud. The only difficulty here is the word *'aṭicil'* which usually refers to cooked food which has to be taken in the most general sense of anything serving as food, so that it may refer to milk.

At *Tirunanipaḷḷi,* his father held him up on his shoulders when he composed the *Tirunanipaḷḷi hymn*—*"Iṭupaṟai onṟa attar piyal mēliruntu innicaiyāl uraitta panuval"*[58] and we are told that the *hymn* was sung for converting the desert of a place into a seashore, full of shade. *Tirukkaḷiṟṟuppaṭiyār*[59] and *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*[60] refer to this miracle but there is nothing specific in that *hymn.* At *Tirumarukal, Campantar* sings in his *hymn* of the age-old *akapporuḷ;* it is a complaint about the Lord that He has made a lovesick maiden falling in love with Him to pine away because of His neglect.[61] But this *hymn* is interpreted to refer to the saint's special pleading on behalf of a maiden who eloped with her lover immediately after the marriage when the latter died there of snakebite. The story gives that this *hymn* brought her lover back to life. But one fails to see any specific reference to this story in this *hymn;*[62] all that is mentioned as evidence to the story in tradition is the expression *'alaṅkal ivaḷ'* (in v. 8) interpreted as 'the damsel with the marriage-garland' (*alaṅkal* may mean any garland in general).

At *Tiruvōttūr* was performed the miracle of converting a male *palmyra* tree into a female one yielding *palmyra* fruits. The line *"Kurumpai āṇ panaiyīn kulai ōttūr"*[63] is often referred as proving this miracle. But the verse refers to this as though it were a freak of nature in that place rather than as a miracle.

On his pilgrimage to the northern *Tamiḻ* country, it is said he forgot to worship at *Tiruvālaṅkāṭu* but the Lord reminded him in time and we are told this is referred to in that *hymn* in the very beginning of the *hymn* itself:

"Tuñcavaruvārum toḻuvippārum vaḻuvippōy
Neñcampukuntennai ninaivippārum munainatpāy

58. 2: 84: 11.
59 *VV.*, 12, 70.
60. *Āl. Piḷ. Antāti,* 17.
61. *Camp.,* 2: 18.
62. 2: 18.
63. 1: 54: 11.

Vañcappaṭuttorutti vāṇāḷkoḷḷum vakaikēṭṭu
Añcumpaḻaiyaṉūr Ālaṅkāṭṭem aṭikaḷē".[64]

It is in this *hymn* that he refers once again to *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* :

"Vaṉaṅkuñciṟuttoṇṭar vaikalēttum vāḻttuṅkēṭṭu
Aṇaṅkumpaḻaiyaṉūr Ālaṅkāṭṭem aṭikaḷē".[65]

Taken along with this reference, one wonders whether the statement in the last verse of this *hymn, "Vēntaṉ aruḷālē viritta pāṭal"*[66] may not be a reference to the king of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar, i.e., Narasiṁhavarma Pallava* or some other king of that part of the country. When discussing the life of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* we had referred to *Campantar's* references to this chief in his *hymn* on *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi,* a *hymn* which *Campantar* states he has sung at the request of this chief *"Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ avaṉ vēṇṭa".*[67]

We had also referred to *Campantar's* reference to *Nīlanakkar,*[68] *Murukaṉ,*[69] *Maṅkaiyarkkaraciyār,*[70] *Kulacciṟaiyār,*[71] *Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟar.*[72]

At *Mylapore, Campantar* sings a *hymn* where in every one of its verses he refers to one monthly festival. He himself says that he has composed it as a *"Pūmpāvaip pāṭṭu".*[73] Every verse ends with the refrain, *"Kāṇātē pōtiyō pūmpāvāy"* — 'O, thou beautiful girl! Will you go away without seeing the festival?' According to tradition this has been sung to bring to life the bone of the daughter of one *Civanēcac ceṭṭiyār,* an admirer and worshipper of *Ñāṉacampantar.*

At *Tirunallūrp perumaṇam, Ñāṉacampantar's* marriage is said to have been performed when he disappeared with all those assembled there, to attain salvation. There is nothing in that *hymn* except the line, *"Perumaṇam pukkiruntīr emaippōkkaruḷīrē"*[74] —

64. 1: 45: 1.
65. 1: 45: 7.
66. 1: 45: 12.
67. 3: 63: 11.
68. 3: 58: 11.
69. 2: 92: 3.
70. 3: 120.
71. 3: 120.
72. 2: 66: 11.
73. 2: 47: 11.
74. 3: 125: 8.

'O, Lord of *Perumaṇam!* You bless me with a way of escape', a prayer which occurs elsewhere also.[75]

Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi in the *Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti* has two verses in praise of *Campantar.*[76] He refers to the three great ideals achieved by *Campantar* during his life time: (1) the joy of the world; (2) curbing the power of the *Jains* and (3) the restoration of *Śaivism* to its past glory. This victory, it is said, was due to *Campantar* getting the blessings of the Mother Goddess even whilst he was an infant. That is the substance of the first verse (33). In the second verse *Nampiyāṇṭār* describes *Campantar* as one who had received (*Nampiyāṇṭār's Āḷuṭaiyapiḷḷaiyār Tiru Antāti*) and who in his own verses had referred to *Ceṅkaṭcōḻaṉ, Murukaṉ* and *Nīlanakkaṉ.*

But *Nampiyāṇṭār* has composed in addition not only the *Āḷuṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār Tiruvantāti* (of 101 verses) but also *Tiruccaṇpai viruttam* consisting of 11 verses, *Tirumummaṇikkōvai* of 30 verses, *Tiruvulāmālai* consisting of 143 *kaṇṇis, Tirukkalampakam* of 49 verses and *Tiruttokai* consisting of 65 lines, all on *Āḷuṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār* or *Campantar.* In these various works of his, he refers to the many incidents of the life of *Campantar* that appealed to him most.

He speaks of him as the Lord of *Pukali* or *Cīkāḻi* whose twelve names he enumerates: 1. *Piramāpuram,* 2. *Veṅkuru,* 3. *Caṇpai,* 4. *Tōṇi,* 5. *Pukali,* 6. *Koccai,* 7. *Ciramārpuram,* 8. *Puṟavam,* 9. *Taṟāy,* 10. *Kāḻi,* 11. *Vēṇupuram* and 12. *Kaḻumalam* (*Āḷuṭaiya-piḷḷaiyār Tiruvantāti*).[77]

Campantar is said to have belonged to the *Kauṇḍinya Gōtra* (*Kavuṇiyar tīpaṉ*).[78] It is rather curious that the kings of the Eastern *Archipelago* claim to belong to this same *Gōtra* and their kingdom was called *Campa,* reminding us of the name *Caṇpai* or *Cīkāḻi* and also of *Campāpati* which is the other name for *Kāvirippūmpaṭṭiṉam.*

Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi thinks of *Campantar* as an '*avatār*' — incarnation.[79] "*Pārmukam uyyap paṟitalaiyōr māluṟṟaḻunta avata-*

75. 3: 45: 1.
76. 33-34.
77. *V.,* 100.
78. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Tir. Antāti,* 3; *Mumma.,* 25; *Tiruk.,* 14, 34.
79. *Caṇpai. Vir.,* 1; *Mumma.,* 4; *Ulāmālai, Kaṇṇi,*.63; *Tiruk.,* 1.

rittōṉ";[80] *"Kaṭakari atu paṭa uritta. . .kaṭavuḷtaṉ tiruvaruḷataṉār-piṟantatu;"*[81] *"Avataritta vaḷḷal";*[82] *"Caṇpai eṉṉum oṇ patiyuḷ utit-taṉaiyē".*[83] *Campantar* is said to have sung 16,000 *patikams.*[84]

Even whilst *Campantar* was a child he was fed by Mother Goddess at the instance of *Śiva* because *Campantar* was hungry and was crying. He showed his father, the Lord, who blessed him, described the various marks of the Lord pointing out at the same time the Lord with his finger — *"Vētattalaivaṉai melviralāl tōṭṭiyalkātan ivaṉ eṉṟu tātaikkuc cūḷ vicumpiṟ kāṭṭiya Kaṉṟu";*[85] *"Tantai kāṇa aṉṟu nalamēṟiya pukaḻccampantaṉ kāṭṭiya nātaṉ";*[86] *"Em Civaṉ ivaṉeṉṟu annāḷ kutalait tiruvāymoḻikaḷ aruḷicceyta";*[87] *"Tōṭaṇi kātiṉaṉ eṉṟum tollamaṉark keññāṉṟum tēṭariya parāpara-ṉaic ceḻumaṟaiyiṉ akaṉ poruḷai antic cemmēṉiyaṉai aṭaiyāḷam pala colli uṇṭaikkuk kāṇa araṉ uvaṉām eṉṟuraittaṉaiyē";*[88] *"Ūḻi mutalvaṉ uvaṉeṉṟu kāṭṭavallāṉ".*[89] The Mother Goddess gave him *ñāṉāmirtam* in a golden bowl. *Nampiyāṇṭār* speaks of the food given as something concentrated—*"Pukali. . .pōṉakam aruntiṭa";*[90] *"Eḷivantavā eḻiṟ pūvarai ñāṇmaṇittār talaṅkat tuḷivanta kaṇpicain tēṅkalum eṅkaḷ araṉ tuṇaiyām kiḷivanta colli poṟkiṇṇattiṉ ñāṉa amirtaḷitta aḷivanta pūṅkuñci iṉcoṟciṟukkaṉtaṉ āraruḷē";*[91] *"Kuñci kūṭāp paruvattu. . .maṅkai taṉ aruḷ peṟṟavaṉ";*[92] *"Vaḷarntatu. . . pūṅkuḻal mātiṭu pōṉakam uṇṭē";*[93] *"Amutuṇ cevvāy";*[94] *"Ampoṉcey vaṭṭilil kōtil amirtam nukar kuñcaram";*[95] *"Malaiyaraiyaṉ maṭap-pāvai naṟkaṇṇi aḷaviṟanta ñāṉattai amirtākkip pōṟkiṇṇattaruḷ purinta pōṉakam muṉ nukarntaṉaiyē";*[96] *"Paṇṭamutu ceytatumai*

80. *Ceṇpai. Vir.,* 1.
81. *Āl. Piḷ. Mum.,* 4.
82. *Tiruvul. Mālai, Kaṇṇi,* 63.
83. *Tiruk.,* 1.
84. *Āḷ. Pil. Tiruvantāti,* 15; *Tiru Ulāmālai, Kaṇṇi* 62; *Tiruttokai, line* 42.
85. *Āl. Piḷ. Tiruvantāti,* 13.
86. *Ibid.,* 16.
87. *Ibid.,* 43.
88. *Tiruk.,* 1:3.
89. *Tiruttokai, line* 10.
90. *Āl. Piḷ. Tiruvantāti,* 40.
91. *Ibid.,* 73.
92. *Cen. Vir.,* 2.
93. *Mum. Kōvai.,* 4.
94. *Ibid.,* 19.
95. *Ulāmālai, Kanni,* 67.
96. *Tirukkalampakam,* 1.

naṅkaiyaruḷ mēvu Śivajñāṉam";[97] "*Jñāṉam tiraḷaiyilē uṇṭaṉai*";[98] "*Mutirāta ceppotta koṅkait tirunutali appaṉ aruḷālē ūṭṭutalum appoḻutē ñāṉat tiraḷāki muṉṉiṉṟa cemmal*".[99]

He seems to be very much taken up by the story of *Campantar* impaling the heretics and reveals in the description of the death of these people, of their blood flowing like water and the kites flying to feed on their corpses — "*Mayilukutta kaṇṭiṉam cūḻnta vaḷai pirampōr kaḻuvā uṭalam viṇṭiṉam cūḻak kaḻuviṉa ākkiya vittakaṉē*";[100] "*Vali keḻu kuṉṭarkku vaikaikkaraiyaṉṟu vāṉ koṭutta kalikeḻu tiṇtōḷ kavuṇiyar tīpaṉ*";[101] "*Toḻunīra vaikaik kuḻuvāy etirnta uṟikkaip paṟitalaik kuṇṭar taṅkaḷ kaḻuvā uṭalam kaḻuviṉa ākkiya kaṟpakam*";[102] "*Amaṇ kaṇam kaḻu ēṟṟi*";[103] "*Uṭalam porutak kaḻuniṟaiyākkuvaṉ*";[104] "*Pukaliyar kōṉaṉṉa nāṭkātiyiṭṭēṟṟum kaḻuttiṟam*";[105] "*Nītikeṭṭār kulaiyak kaḻuviṉ kuḻukkaṇṭavaṉ*";[106] "*Vātiṉil vallamaṇaip paṇṇaik kaḻuviṉ nutivaittem panta viṉai aṟukkum*";[107] "*Āṟumaṇṭap paṇṭu ceñcol naṭātti amaṇ muḻutum pāṟumaṇṭak kaṇṭa caiva cikāmaṇi*";[108] "*Kaṇṭatu uṟiyoṭu pīli orukaiyil koḷḷum paṟi talaic camaṇaip pal kaḻumicaiyē*";[109] "*Vaikaiyil amaṇarai vātu ceytaṟutta Caiva Cikāmaṇi Campantaṉ*";[110] "*Vallamaṇar ollaik kaḻuvil ulakka*";[111] "*Teṉṉaṉṟaṉ kūṭal kulanakaril vātil amaṇar valitolaiyak kātalāl puṇkeḻuvu cempuṉaläṟu ōṭap porutavarai vaṉkaḻuvil taitta maṟaiyōṉ*";[112] "*Aṉṟamaṇar kūṭṭattai ācaḻittup poṉṟa uraikeḻuvu centamiḻppā oṉṟiṉāl veṉṟi nirai kaḻumēl uyttāṉ*";[113] "*Amaṇaraik kaḻu nutikku aṇaivuṟuttavaṉum nī*";[114] "*Aṟivāki iṉpam cey tamiḻ vātil veṉṟanta amaṇāṉa vaṉkuṇṭar kaḻuvēṟa muṉ kaṇṭa ceṟi māṭa vaṇcaṇpai*

97. *Ibid.*, 9.
98. *Mum. Kōvai*, 12.
99. *Tiruttokai, lines* 5-8.
100. *Al. Pil. Tiruvantāti*, 6.
101. *Ibid.*, 12.
102 *Ibid.*, 28.
103. *Ibid.*, 39.
104. *Ibid.*, 51.
105. *Ibid.*, 66.
106. *Ibid.*, 81.
107. *Ibid.*, 98.
108. *Caṇ. Viruttam*, 9.
109. *Mum. Kōvai*, 4.
110. *Ibid.*, 13.
111. *Ulāmālai, Kaṇṇi*, 59.
112. *Ibid.*, 73-74.
113. *Ibid.*, 134-35.
114. *Kalampakam*, 1.

nakarāḷi";[115] *"Kaṇṭatu arukantar kulamonṟi mulutum kaluvil ēṟa";*[116]*"Arukarai murukkiya tamil payiṟṟiya nāvaṉ";*[117] *"Vaṉpakaiyām akkuṇṭarai veṉṟōy";*[118] *"Pāḷi amaṇaik kaluvēṟṟiṉāṉ";*[119] He has got a special fascination of the names *"Arukācaṉi";*[120] *"Kuṇṭācaṉi";*[121] *"Amararkkuk kālaṉ";*[122] *'Arukācaṉi'* means the thunder to the *Arhas.* He also refers to the *Buddhist* monk whose head rolled on the ground — *"Nērvanta puttaṉ talaiyaip puvimēl puraḷvitta vittakap pāṭal vilampiṉāṉ".*[123]

He gives more details about the debate with the *Jains* — *"Arukar kuḷām veṉṟa koccaiyarkōṉ";*[124] *"Arukar taṅkaḷ teṉṉāṭṭu araṇ aṭṭa ciṅkam";*[125] *"Vaikai māṇṭaṉar eṉpar...paracamaya kōḷarikkun ṉikarāt tamil nāṭṭuḷḷa kuṇṭarkaḷē";*[126] *"Coṟceṟi nīḷkavi ceytaṉṟu vaikaiyil tollamaṉar paṟceṟiyā vaṇṇam kātta Campantaṉ";*[127] *"Arukantar muṉkalaṅka naṭṭa muṭai keḷumu māl iṉṉam puṉ kalaṅkal vaikaippuṉal";*[128] *"Amaṇmalaintāṉ".*[129] In the *Tiruttokai* he refers to *Pāṇṭimātēvi* and *Kulacciṟai* praising *Campantar* whilst the heretics set fire probably to *Campantar's* own *mutt,* when he ordered the fire to catch hold of the *Pāṇḍya* — *"Pattic civameṉṟu pāṇṭimā tēviyoṭum koṟṟak katirvēl Kulacciṟaiyum koṇṭāṭum aṟṟaip poḷutattu amaṇariṭu ventīyaip paṟṟic cuṭuka pōyp pāṇṭiyaṉai eṉṉa vallāṉ";*[130] *"Kāntum kaṉalil kuḷir paṭuttuk kaṭal kūṭaliṉvāy vēntiṉ tuyar tavirttāṉ".*[131] The *Pāṇḍya* was cured of his misery[132] probably with the sacred ash. *Nampiyāṇṭār* refers to the verses of *Campantar* undergoing the ordeal of water and fire. He specifically mentions that the *hymn* beginning with *'Pōkamār'* went through the ordeal of fire. The *cadjan* leaf containing *Campantar's hymn* went

115. *Ibid.,* 8.
116. *Ibid.,* 9.
117 *Ibid.,* 18.
118. *Ibid.,* 20.
119. *Tiruttokai, Kaṇṇi,* 5.
120. *Al. Pil. Antāti,* 9, 10, 19, 65, 76, 88; *Tirukkalampakam,* 7, 21.
121. *Caṇ. Vir.,* 7.
122. *Mum.,* 6.
123. *Tiruttokai, ll.* 38-40.
124. *Āḷ. Pil. Antāti.,* 36.
125. *Ibid.,* 43.
126. *Ibid.,* 54.
127. *Mum.,* 21.
128. *Ibid.,* 26.
129. *Ibid.,* 29.
130. T. *tokai, ll.* 48-52.
131. *Aḷ. Piḷ. Tiruvantāti,* 71.
132. *Ibid.,* 71.

against the current of the stream of *Vaikai* — *"Nilaviya Vaikaiyāṟṟu ēṭiṭṭu vāṉīr etirōṭṭum ceykaiyāl mikka ceyaluṭaiyāṉ"*;[133] *"Maṅkaiyiṭattaraṉaik kavi nīr etir ōṭa matittaruḷ cey taṅku pukaḻc catur māmaṟai nāvaḷar caiva cikāmaṇi"*.[134]

Nampiyāṇṭār mentions *Campantar* receiving gold coin as prize along with *Tirunāvukkaracar* at *Tiruvīḻimiḻalai*, an important meeting according to him of the two saints which saved the world— *"Pāṭiya centamiḻāl palaṅkācu paricil peṟṟa nīṭiya cīrt tiru ñāṉacampantaṉ niṟai pukaḻāṉ nēṭiya pūntiru nāvuk karacōṭu eḻil miḻalaik kūṭiya kūṭṭattiṉāl uḷatāyttik kuvalayamē"*;[135] *"Tēcam muḻutum malai maṟantu ūṇ keṭac centaḻaṟkai īcaṉ tiruvaruḷāl eḻil vīḻimiḻalaiyiṉvāyk kācin malaipoḻintāṉ"*;[136] *"Tuṅkap puricai toku miḻalai aṅkataṉil nittaṉ celuṅkācu koṇṭu nikaḻ nelvāyil muttiṉ civikai mutalkoṇṭu"*;[137] *"Vayal aṇi teṉ vīḻimiḻalaiyiṉilavu kācin mali malai poḻiyum māṉa kuṇa maturaṉ"*;[138] *"Vīḻimiḻalaip paṭikkācu koṇṭa pirāṉ"*.[139]

He also refers to *Campantar* as the friend of *Nīlanakkar*, *Muruka Nāyaṉār* and *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* — *"Eḻil Nīlanakkarkum iṉpap pūntaṉ pukalūr Murukaṟkum tōḻaṉ"*;[140] *"Nilavu Murukaṟkum Nīlanakkaṟkum tolaivil pukaḻc ciṟuttoṇṭaṟkum kulaviya tōḻamaiyāyt tollaip piṟapparutta cuntaraṉ"*.[141] In one place *Nampiyāṇṭār* states that if we praise *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* we can easily attain an intimate relationship with *Campantar* — *"Virumpum putalvaṉai meyyarintu ākkiya iṉṉamirtam arumpum puṉal caṭaiyāy uṇṭaruḷ eṉṟaṭi paṇinta irumpiṉ cuṭark kaḻiṟṟāṉ Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉai ēttutirēl curumpiṉ malart tamiḻākaraṉ pātat toṭarvu eḷitē"*.[142] He also refers to *Campantar* making mention of *Murukanāyaṉār's* worship in the hymn of *Varttamāṉīccuram* — *"Varttamāṉicar kaḻal vaṇaṅki vāḻ Muruka pattiyai īcaṉ patikattē kāṭṭiṉāṉ"*.[143] Along with this fact he mentions that *Campantar* was very friendly with *Nīlanakkaṉ* — *"Attaṉ Tirunīlanakkaṟkum aṉpuṭaiyāṉ"*.[144]

133. *Tiruttokai, ll.* 33-35.
134. *Tirukkalampakam*, 15.
135. *Aḷ. Pil. Tiruvantāti*, 80.
136. *Ibid.*, 41.
137. *Ulāmālai, Kaṇṇi*, 78-79.
138. *Tirukkalampakam*, 24.
139. *Tiruttokai, l.*, 11.
140. *Āḷ. Pil. Tiruvantāti*, 71.
141. *Tiru Ulāmālai, Kaṇṇi*, 71-72.
142. *Al. Pil. Tiruvantāti*, 72.
143. *Tiruttokai, ll.*, 52-53.
144. *Ibid., l.*, 54.

Nampiyāṇṭār sings of *Campantar's* greatness and love which were so endearing to the Lord that he blessed him with the cymbal (*tāḷam*) at *Kōlakkā*;[145] with a palanquin of pearls at *Nelvāyil Arattuṟai*;[146] with a purse of a thousand gold coins at *Āvaṭutuṟai* to enable his father to perform sacrifice.[147]

He refers to the discomfiture of the proud *Pāṇa* probably *Nīlakaṇṭayāḻppāṇar* and the smashing of the *yāḻ* by him because of his impossibility to play the *hymn* called "*yāḻmūri*' in his '*yāḻ*'.[148]

At *Tirumarukal*, he states that when the husband fell down dead, bitten by a poisonous serpent, *Campantar* took pity on his wife and saved him.[149] In *Tiruttokai*, *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* refers to another incident where *Campantar* saved this time a woman who died of snake poison. Probably this refers to what the later day generation referred to as the "*Aṅkam pūmpāvai*" incident of *Mylapore* though *Nampiyāṇṭār* nowhere mentions that the bones alone were transformed into a maiden — "*Veyya viṭam mēvi iṟantā ayilvēṟkaṉ maṭamakaḷai vāveṉṟalaippittim maṇṇulakil vāḻvitta cīrniṉṟa cemmaic ceyaluṭaiyāṉ*".[150]

Another miracle of *Campantar* is curing the daughter of a *Maḻava* chief who was suffering from *Muyalakaṉ* or epileptic fits. Tradition has it that this miracle was performed by the *hymn* sung at *Tiruppāccilāccirāmam*. This is one of the *Akapporuḷ hymns*, a complaint by the mother of the love-sick maiden who had fallen in love with the Lord.[151]

The miracle of changing a desert into a fertile sea-base at *Naṉipaḷḷi* is also referred to by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*.[152] There is a line in *Tiruttokai*, *l.* 17 — which is often taken to refer to this miracle but that line simply states that *Ñāṉacampantar* was capable of singing *Pālai* and *Neytal*—"*Pālaiyum neytalum pāṭa-*

145. *Āḷ. Piḷ Tiruvantāti*, 40, 82; *Mummaṇikkōvai*, 4; *Ulāmālai*, 82; *Tiruttokai*, *l.*, 22.
146. *Āḷ Piḷ. Antāti*, 40, 83; *Mum.*, 4, 28; *Ulāmālai*, 79; *Tiruttokai*, *l.*, 24.
147. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti*, 40, 84; *Mum.*, 4. *Ulā.*, 80; *Tiruttokai*, *ll.*, 18-19.
148. *Āl. Pil*, *Tir.*, 39, 91; *Mum.*, 1; *Ulā.*, 77; *Tiruk.*, 26; *Tiru.*, *l.* 13.
149. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti*, 28, 49; *Caṇpai Virut.*, 3; *Mum.*, 4; *Ulāmālai Kaṇṇi*, 137-138; *Tiruk.*, 41; *Tiruttokai*, *l.* 21.
150. *Tiruttokai*, *ll.*, 35-38.
151. *Camp.*, 1:44.
152. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti*, 17; *Caṉ. Vir.*, 4; *Tiruvulamālai*, *Kaṇṇi*, 75.

vallāṉ", *i.e.* capable of singing the '*Pālai*' and '*Neytal*' tracts even whilst he was young.

The other miracle of metamorphosing a male *palmyra* into a female *palmyra* at *Tiruvōttūr* is mentioned in several places.[153]

At *Tirukkoḷḷampūtūr*, *Campantar* crossed the *Kāviri* river against the current with the help of a boat. This is looked upon as a great miracle of *Campantar* and this is referred to in various places.[154]

The story of *Campantar's* closing the doors of *Tirumaṟaikkāṭu* is another miracle mentioned in various places.[155]

The marriage of *Campantar* performed at *Nallūrp perumaṇam* when everyone attained Salvation is another miraculous act.[156]

Ulāmālai[157] mentions that *Campantar* cured his relatives and *aṭiyārs* from the shivering fever with which they suffered at *Koṅku*.

In some temples like *Uttarakōcamaṅkai*, we find the image of *Campantar* with one leg held up in a dancing posture and playing upon the cymbal (*tāḷam*) whilst singing. *Nampiyāṇṭār* almost describes this form—"*Ciṟuparaṟ karanta viḷikuraṟ kiṇkiṇi cevipul-lic cilkural iyaṟṟi amutuṇ cevvāy aruvi tūṅkat tāḷam piriyāt taṭak-kai acaittuc ciṟu kūttiyaṟṟic civaṉ aruḷpeṟṟa naṟṟamiḻ virakaṉ*".[158]

The story of Śiva offering the milk of *Pārvatī* and the enraged father demanding the child to point out the person who had given the milk has taken the present form even during the time of *Paṭṭiṉattār*:

"*Tātaiyoṭu vanta vētiyac ciṟuvaṉ*
Taḷarnaṭaip paruvattu vaḷarpaci varutta
Aṉṉāyō eṉṟaḻaippa muṉṉiṉṟu
Ñāṉa pōṉakattu aruḷaṭṭik kuḻaitta
Āṉāt tiraḷai avaṉvayiṉ aruḷa

153. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti*, 39; *Mum.*, 4; *Ulāmālai*, 81; *Tirut.*, *l.*, 28.
154. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti*, 39; *Mum.*, 4; *Tiruvulāmālai*, *Kaṇṇi*, 77; *Tiruk.*, 41; *Tirut.*, *ll.* 30-31.
155. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti.*, 39, 91; *Caṇpaiviruttam*, 7; *Mum.*, 4; *Ulā. Kaṇṇi*, 77 *Tirut.*, *ll.*, 26-27.
156. *Āḷ. Piḷ. Antāti*, 60; *Caṇpai Virut.*, 10; *Tirut.*, *ll.*, 61-65.
157. *Kaṇṇi*, 78.
158. *Mum.*, 19.

Antaṇaṉ muṉintu tantār yāreṉa
Avaṉaik kāṭṭuvaṉ appā vāṉār
Tōṭuṭaiya ceviyaṉ eṉṟum
Pīṭuṭaiya pemmāṉ eṉṟum
Kaiyiṟ cuṭṭik kāṭṭa
Aiyaṉī veḷippaṭ taruliṉai āṅkē".[159]

"The *Brahmin* boy went with his father whilst he was not capable of walking aright. The growing hunger began to inflict him and he cried, 'O, Mother! You stood before him. The food of wisdom mixed with your Grace, you offered as the infinite morsel. The *Brahmin* (father) was angry and asked of the child to show who gave the food. The child said, 'Father, I shall show Him. He is "*Tōṭuṭaiya ceviyaṉ; pīṭuṭaiya pemmāṉ'* — thus singing he pointed You out, with his finger and lo, You became manifest then and there".[160]

Śrī Śankarāchārya, in his *Soundaryalahari,* describes the heaving bosom of the Mother and refers to its milk making the *Tamiḻ* child sing the glorious and mellifluous verses. Commentators like *Laksmīdhara* fail to understand the reference; but anyone who knows the story of *Campantar* will readily identify the *Tamiḻ* child as *Tirujñāṉasambandar.* The *Tamiḻ* translation of this work by *Vīrai Kavirāja Paṇṭitar* and its commentary by *Śaiva Ellappa Nāvalar* makes this point quite clear. Therefore, this story must have become popular by the time of *Śrī Śankarāchārya.*

Cēkkiḻār describes the story of *Ñāṉacampantar* almost as a great epic in 1257 verses. The name of the father of *Ñāṉacampantar* is *Civapāta Irutayar* (15), a fact not known to us from *Campantar's hymns.* The father was feeling miserable (18) at the spread of heresy and was anxious to bring forth a child (19) who would restore the past glory. Like *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi, Cēkkiḻār* speaks of *Campantar's* birth as an *avatār* (26). The child grew up and attained three years of age (54). The father took the child with him to the temple tank to bathe, because the child persisted in coming with him (56). When he was inside the water uttering *aghamarṣaṇa mantra* (60), the child not seeing the father began to cry *'Ammē, Appā—Mamma, Pappa!'. Śiva* came with the Mother Goddess and requested the Mother to feed the

159. *Tirukkaḻu. Mum. Kōvai, Il.,* 23-33.
160. *Ibid.*

child with her milk—'*pāl aṭicil*' (69) in a gold bowl, a description clearly following *Campantar's* verse, "*Pōtaiyār poṟkiṇṇat taṭicil,*"[161] and when she did so the child became full with divine knowledge and *Śivajñānasambandha* (69), *i.e.,* one who is linked to divine experience — realizing that the Lord is the creator of everything and the Lord of his servants (71).

The father coming out of the tank found the child with marks of milk and was afraid that it had taken the food given by someone other than a *Brahmin.* He was, therefore, angry for the breach of the caste rules and demanded the child to show the person who had given the food (72). All this is clearly brought out by the poem of *Campantar.*[162]

Probably, it is this breach of the caste rules *Ārūrar* refers to, when he speaks of *Campantar* having committed a fault, which fault God accepted as his greatness: "*Naṟṟamiḻ valla Ñāṉa-campantar....kuṟṟañceyyiṉum kuṇameṉak karutuṅ koḷkai kaṇṭu niṉ kurai kaḻal aṭaintēṉ*".[163] That divine wisdom dawned upon *Campantar,* thanks to the blessing of the Lord of *Cīkāḻi,* is also referred to by *Ārūrar.*[164] From these references, the story of the drinking of *Pārvatī's* milk had grown and the *hymn* '*Tōṭuṭaiya ceviyaṉ*' is said to have been sung in reply to the father and pointing to *Śiva* as the person who had given him milk. That *hymn* is an '*akapporuḷ*' song being the speech of a love-sick maiden confessing that *Śiva* as *Bhikṣāṭana* is the person who had robbed her heart making her emaciated as to lose her bangles: "*Ērparanta iṉaveḷ vaḷai cōra eṉ uḷḷam kavar kaḷvaṉ*";[165] "*Iṟaikalanta iṉa veḷ vaḷai cōra eṉ uḷḷam kavar kaḷvaṉ*".[166]

The father of *Campantar, Cēkkiḻār* continues, took the child on his shoulders (94) and when *Campantar* sang the *hymn* beginning with "*Maṭaiyil vāḷai*"[167] at *Tirukkōlakkā,* two cymbals of gold, on each of which was inscribed the *pañcākṣara,* came into the hands of the child (103). When people learnt of this, invitations

161. 3:24:2.
162. 3:24:2.
163. 7:55:4.
164. 7:97:9.
165. 1:1:3.
166. 1:1:6.
167. 1:23.

from various places poured in. *Campantar* started on a pilgrimage to temples and visited *Tirunaṉipaḷḷi* (116) where his mother was born. *Tirunīlakaṇṭa Yālppāṇar* came to *Cīkāḻi* along with his wife and undertook, of his own accord, to follow *Campantar* wherever he went so as to play the *hymns* on his *yāḻ* (131). After worshipping at various places around *Cīkāḻi* and *Citamparam, Campantar* reached *Nelvāyil Aratturai* and rested that night at *Māraṉpāṭi*. *Śiva* appeared in the dream of the people of *Nelvāyil Aratturai* and directed them to present *Campantar* with an umbrella, a pearl palanquin and '*ciṉṉam*' or horns, kept within the temple (197). *Śiva* appeared also in the dream of *Campantar* to request him to accept His gift (206). *Hymn* 90 of the second *Tirumurai* was then sung when he accepted the gift according to *Periyapurāṇam*.

The '*upanayanam*' ceremony of *Campantar* was duly performed according to the *Vēdic* rites, but he emphasized on that occasion about the greatness of *Pañcākṣara* (266), the *mantra* of the *Śaivites*, by singing *hymn* 22 of the third *Tirumurai*, beginning "*Tuñcalum tuñcalilāta pōḻtum*". Hearing of the fame of *Campantar, Tirunāvukkaracar* came down to *Cīkāḻi* and lived with him for some days (273) before he left on his pilgrimage to the temples (274). *Campantar,* when he went round the temples, once came to *Tiruppāccilāccirāmam* where the chief *Kollimaḻavaṉ* brought his daughter suffering from epileptic fits or *Muyalakaṉ* to the presence of *Campantar* (217) who sang the *hymn* beginning with "*Tuṇivaḷar tiṅkaḷ*"[168] and cured her of the disease. He reached *Ceṅkuṉrūr* (324) where probably people were accustomed to suffer from a kind of hill malaria. His followers had an attack of his fever. He sang the *hymn* beginning with "*Avviṉaikkivviṉai*",[169] when all his followers as well as others became whole (336). Whilst he was nearing *Tiruppaṭṭīccuram* (391), it was so hot that a *Śivagaṇa* held up a canopy of pearls over his head (392), a canopy which came down to be caught by the followers of *Campantar* (394). *Hymn* 73 of the third *Tirumurai* was then sung. In the last verse, the words, "*Pantamuyar vīṭum nala Paṭṭiccuram*" occur; perhaps there was another reading "*Pantar uyar*" from which this story of the pearl canopy might have arisen.

168. 1:44:1.
169. 1:116.

Whilst *Campantar* was at *Tiruvāvaṭuturai*, his father was desirous of performing a sacrifice for which he wanted money (422). *Hymn* 4 of the 3rd *Tirumurai* where he rhetorically asks of the Lord, "Is there nothing to be given?" is said to have been sung on this occasion, when *it* is said a *Śivabhūta* placed a purse of 1000 coins on the pedestal (426). *Campantar* went to the place of *Tirunīlakaṇṭa Yālppāṇar's* mother, *Viz., Tarumapuram* (444) and *Pāṇar's* relatives were so proud as to claim all the popularity of *Campantar's hymns* for the musical talents of *Pāṇar* (445). *Pāṇar* felt so miserable that he begged of *Campantar* to sing a *hymn which* cannot be played on the *yāl*. *Pāṇar* was about to break his musical instrument when he could not play the *'Yālmūri' hymn* on his *yāl*[170] but *Campantar* begged of him to resist *that attempt* (450-52). On his pilgrimage to various temples, *Campantar* came *to Marukal* where he heard the lament of a maiden who had eloped with her beloved who was unfortunately bitten by a snake. Moved by this tragic situation, *Campantar* sang the *hymn, "Caṭaiyāy eṉumāl"*[171] to bring back the dead man to life (482-83). At the instance of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar,* he worshipped at *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi.* He met *Tirunāvukkaracar* at *Tiruppukalūr* (492-93) and went to *Tiruvārūr* to worship on the *Tiruvātirai* day (496). At *Tiruvīlimilalai* he had a vision of the Lord of *Cīkāli* (555). Whilst these two saints were staying at *Tiruvīlimilalai* a severe famine raged in the country. The saints got a coin each from the Lord of the temple to feed their followers. At first a coin on which a commission had to be paid, was given to *Campantar* and therefore *Campantar* sang[172] begging the Lord to give coins on which no commission need be paid (570). Both the saints then reached *Tirumaṟaikkāṭu* (575) where *Appar* sang a *hymn* for opening the gates of the temple (582) whilst *Campantar* sang one to close them (587).

Whilst staying there, people from *Maturai* came to inform them of the persecution of the *Śaivites* by heretics. *Appar* offered to go, lest the heretics should do any harm to *Campantar.* He also pointed out that it was not an auspicious occasion whereupon, *Campantar* sang the *'Kōlaṟu Patikam'*[173] (616). Therein, he stated that everything was auspicious to the followers of God.

170. 1:136.
171. 2:18.
172. 1:92.
173. 2:85.

Kulacciṟaiyār, the minister and *Maṅkaiyarkkaraci*, the queen welcomed him to *Maturai* (660) when he sang a *hymn*.[174] On the night of his arrival, the heretics by their black magic, set fire to the *mutt* (700), where *Campantar* and his followers were staying. Knowing this, *Campantar* sang the *hymn* 3:51, ordering the fire to catch hold of the *Pāṇḍya* in the form of fever (705). The pain was so unbearable that the *Pāṇḍya* consulted his minister and the queen who explained to him that all this was due to his friends trying to set fire to the *mutt* (719). The king sent for *Campantar* (723) who, however, went to the temple for knowing the will of the Lord as to his entering on a debate with the heretics by singing the *hymns* 3:47 and 3:108. After knowing the will of the Lord, he went to the palace and when the *Pāṇḍya* asked of him his birth place (753), he replied by singing the *hymn* 2:70. The heretics, were all in anger and even the queen became nervous when *Campantar* re-assured her by singing the *hymn* 3:39. The heretics undertook to cure the left side of the king and *Campantar*, the right side of the king. *Campantar* sang the *hymn* on the sacred ash[175] and cured the fever on both the sides, when the heretics felt helpless (766). The heretics preferred the magical contest of fire and water from which the *cadjan* leaves containing the truths of their respective religions should escape. *Campantar* took out the *hymn* of *Tirunaḷḷāṟu*[176] from his collected works and threw it into the fire (783) and sang the *hymn, "Taḷariḷa vaṉamulai"*.[177] Whilst the *cadjan* leaf of the heretics was burnt to ashes, the leaf of *Campantar* remained fresh (789). Then followed the ordeal by water. The *hymn "Vāḻka antaṇar"*[178] was written on a *cadjan* leaf and thrown into the waters of *Vaikai*. Whilst the *cadjan* leaf of the Jains rushed away with the current, *Campantar's* leaf travelled against the current and reached *'Tiruvēṭakam'* (850) where *Campantar* sang.[179] *Campantar* refers to the *cadjan* leaf reaching *Ēṭakam, "Ēṭu ceṉṟaṇaitarum Ēṭakam"* in the last verse of his *hymn*. How a temple was built there and how the place itself came to be called *Ēṭakam* even whilst *Campantar* was singing the *hymn* when the *cadjan* leaf travelling against the current are not made clear.

174. 3:120.
175. 2:66.
176. 1:49.
177. 3:87.
178. 3:54.
179. 3:32.

The heretics — the *'ātatāyins* — were impaled as a punishment for their crime of setting fire to the living quarters of *Campantar* and his followers (855). It is not clear how this tradition grew, for prior to the song of *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi,* we do not hear anything about this story. One modern writer has printed a verse of *Campantar* with the reading, *"Ciraṅkaḷaic cinta vātu ceyyat tiruvuḷḷamē"*—'Is it your wish that the heads of the heretics should roll down?' instead of the old reading, *"Tiraṅkaḷaic cinta vātu ceyyattiru vuḷḷamē"* — 'Is it your wish that I should debate with the heretics bringing their capacities to nothing?' Perhaps some such reading or misunderstading was responsible for the growth of this tradition.

After this, *Campantar* went to the temples in the *Cōḻa* country and once when he had to cross the river *Kāviri* in a boat without a boatman, he sang the *hymn "Koṭṭamē kamaḻum"*[180] (898). The word *"Cella untuka"* occurs in every one of the verses and the sixth verse speaks of *"Ōṭamvantaṇaiyum Koḷḷampūtūr".* *'Ōṭamvantaṇaiyum'* is the description of that place as much as *'Āṟuvantaṇaiyum'* and other phrases which occur in other verses. It is, however, on this description that the tradition had grown.

When he reached *Pōtimaṅkai* (904), the seat of the *Buddhists,* one *Buddhanandi* (906) opposed him and one of his followers went to write his verses on the *cadjan* leaf sang the verse *"Puttar Camaṇ kaḻukkaiyar"*[181] where it is stated that the *Pañcākṣara* was the weapon against the enemies of *Śaivites.* We are told that the *Buddhist* died of a lightning shock (909).

Campantar came to meet *Appar* at *Tiruppūnturutti* (929) where unknown to others, *Appar* carried the palanquin of *Campantar* along with others (934). *Campantar* was shocked to learn this and got down from the palanquin to embrace the elder saint (936). After taking leave of *Appar, Campantar* went to the temples of *Toṇṭaināṭu* (945). At *Tiruvōttūr,* he found all the *palmyras* planted becoming male ones (978). He sang the *hymn 'Pūttērntāyaṉa'.*[182] In the last verse he speaks of *"Kurumpai āṇ paṉai īṉ kulai Ōttūr".* Probably it is a beautiful description of the freak of nature around which a tradition had grown. At *Tirumayilāp-*

180. 3:6:1.
181. 3:22:10..
182. 1:54.

pūr, one *Civanēcaccettiyār* had a daughter by name *Pūmpāvai* (1044) whom he wanted to give away to *Ñānacampantar*. But she unfortunately died of snake bite. Her poor father preserved her bones in a pot which he placed before *Campantar* on his visit to *Mylapore*. *Campantar* sang the '*Pūmpāvaippatikam*'[183] and out of the bones rose a beautiful damsel back to life (1090). Having brought her to life he explained that he was in a sense her father and therefore he could not marry her (1114). *Campantar* returned home and his parents in spite of his refusal, insisted on his marrying the daughter of *Nampāṇṭār Nampi* (1161) at *Tirunallūrpperumaṇam*. *Tirunīla nakka Nāyaṉār* acted as the priest (1239). Whilst coming round the fire along with his wife, he sang the *hymn*[184] beginning with '*Nallūrpperumaṇam*' and all the assembly disappeared as it were into the light. He sang the *Pañcākṣara hymn* beginning with '*Kātalālāki*'[185] ordering all to enter into the light to attain salvation including *Tirunīlanakkar*, *Tirunīlakaṇṭa yāḻppaṇar*, *Murukaṉ*, *Nampaṇṭār* and *Civapāta Irutayar*, on that *Vaikāci mūlam* day.

The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions are summarized as follows: "*Tirujñāna Sambandhi-piḷḷe nāyaṉār* was a Brahman *Śaivite* famous for his *Tamiḻ* songs in praise of *Śiva*. He is considered an *Avatār* of *Śiva*. He cured *Kubjapāṇḍya*, King of *Madura*, of his fever which *Jinasēna* and other *Jaina* devotees of his time could not cure with all their *Jaina* spells and charms, and thus persuaded him to embrace *Śaivism* again. He paid a visit to *Gajāraṇya* and worshipped the *Liṅga* which was set up there by *Raktākshachōḻa*, son of *Subhadēva*, *King of Chōḻas*. *Vāgīśa*, *Nīla nagna*, *Skandanāthā*, *Kulapaksha*, *Haradatta* and others were his contemporaries. At his request, *Tirumaṅghayāḻvār*, one of the celebrated *Vaishṇava* saints, anterior to *Rāmānujachārya*, paid a visit to a *Vaishṇava* temple in *Madura*. *Vādībhasiṁha*, a celebrated *Jaina* scholar, is said to have disputed with *Sambandhar* on the merits of *Śaivism*".[186] We have already pointed out that in this tradition various great men who had lived in different periods are brought together as is often done in the stories of other great men like *Śaṅkara*. *Vādībhasimha*, who is the author of *Gadya*

183. 2:47.
184. 3:125.
185. 3:49.
186. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, p. 8.

Cintāmaṇi, is considered to have lived during the reign of *Rāja-rāja II* of the 12th century.

One of the *Dārāsuram* sculptures gives a representation of the story of *Āḷuṭaiyapiḷḷaiyār* (*Campantar*). We have on the right, an elderly person with a beard and a sacred thread and with a tuft of hair knotted to the left. He is placing his left hand on the hip and holding a stick in the right hand as it were in the act of beating. A child stands in front with a vessel in its left hand. On the left appear *Śiva* and *Pārvatī* on the sacred bull. This depicts the story of *Campantar* pointing to the Lord after having drunk the milk.[187]

We have thus seen the story of *Ñāṉacampantar* developing from time to time; but the references in *Ārūrar's hymns* are crystal clear about the life of *Campantar* as *Ārūrar* had known it. We had given references to *Campantar's* verses where the great saint describes his own experience and his own message which must have moved *Ārūrar* to such a great extent as to speak of himself as simply following in the footsteps of *Campantar*. The references in *Ārūrar's hymns* seem to suggest that *Campantar* was the leader of an important school of thought and worship which *Ārūrar* followed.

The 83rd *sūtra* of *Narada Bhakti Sūtra* is important from this point of view: "Thus the teachers of *Bhakti* unanimously declare without being in the least afraid of public criticism — the great teachers *Kumāra, Vyāsa, Sukha, Śāndilya, Gārga, Viṣṇu, Kaundinya, Śēsha, Uddhava, Ariṇi, Bali, Hanumān, Vishisana* and others". The work, *'Nārada Bhakti Sūtra'* is assigned to the 12th century and the teacher *Śēsha* mentioned therein is sometimes interpreted as referring to *Rāmānujācharya*. In that case, it is for consideration whether *Kaundinya* may not refer to *Jñānasambandha* who calls himself *'Kavuṇiyaṉ'* (*Kaundinya*) in many of his verses. If this interpretation is correct, *Campantar* must be the head of a school of *Śaivite Bhaktas* believing in singing *hymns* in praise of God.

II

The 29th saint is *Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāma Nāyaṉār*. The words of *Ārūrar* are *"Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāmaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the

187. *Annual Report of Epigraphy* 1919-20, *Pl.* 6, fig. 45.

servant of the servants of *Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāma Nāyaṉār*'. '*Ēyar*' is the *Tamiḻ* form of the word '*Haihaya*'. Therefore, *Ēyarkōṉ* will mean the *Haihaya* chief. The *Haihaya* chiefs are mentioned in inscriptions as *Haihaya kōṉas*.[188] The *Haihayas* are mentioned in inscriptions as having been defeated by the *Chāḷukyas*.[189] The rulers of *Tirukkōvalūr* were *Malayamaṉs* from where the great patron *Malayamāṉ* of the *Caṅkam* age ruled and they called themselves *Malayamāṉs* after that great patron of *Tamiḻ*.

In the age of the later *Cōḻas*, we find them calling themselves *Cētirāyas* and *Kōvalarāyas*. Of the former title, Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastry writes, "It is evident of the new tradition that was growing by which these chieftains sought to establish a connection with the *Haihayas* of *Cēdi* at a time when all ruling chieftains were busy finding a *purāṇic* pedigree for themselves".[190] But the tradition is at least as old as the age of *Ārūrar*, where we find this name *Ēyarkōṉ*. *Meypporuḷ Nāyaṉār* is called *Malāṭarkōmāṉ* and *Cētivēntar* (*Periyapurāṇam*) but unfortunately, the native place of *Ēyarkōṉ* is not given by *Ārūrar* or *Nampiyāṇṭār*. Are we to assume that from the term *Ēyarkōṉ*, his native place can be nothing else than *Tirukkōvalūr*. *Ārūrar* mentions *Ēyarkōṉ* in the *hymn* he sang on *Tiruppuṉkūr*[191] and *Cēkkiḻar* makes *Tirupperumaṅkalam* near *Tiruppuṉkūr* on the north bank of the *Kāviri*, the native place of this saint. *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyar* will appear to be another chief of this family. The other part of the name *Kalikkāmar* is also a problem for historians. We had suggested that the term *Kali* might refer to the *Kaliyaracar* or *Kalabhras*. *Kalikkāmaṉ* may either mean a member of this royal family who had the proper name *Kāmaṉ*. As this saint is called *Ēyarkōṉ*, he cannot be said to belong to the *Kali* family as well. *Kalikkāmaṉ*, therefore, had to be taken to mean a partisan of the *Kali* family as opposed to the name *Kalippakai*, the enemy of the *Kalis*, a name borne by that chieftain who was betrothed to the sister of *Tirunāvukkaracar*, who as a chieftain probably of *Siṁhaviṣṇu*, conquered the *Kalabhras*. As Prof. Nilakanta Sastry points out, some of the names and titles imply close dynastic connection among these different families of feudatory rulers, so that a member of

188. 513/1892; 520/1893.
189. 248/1896, 491/1893, 186/1893, 234/1893, etc.
190. *Cōlās* by K. A. N. Sastry.
191. 7:55:3.

a particular family is found to assume the title of another family or families. One *Malayamāṉ* as the Professor points out calls himself a *Vāṇakularāyaṉ* and another *Malayamāṉ* calls himself a *Pallavarāyaṉ*. In this light, a member of the *Kali* family may assume the title of *Haihaya*. It is interesting to note that there is a city named after *Kalikkāma,* the famous *Kalikkāmūr* sung by *Campantar.*[192] In the 8th verse of this *hymn, Campantar* refers to a king with the serpent crown ruling the world from *Kalikkāmūr* : *"Ūr aravam talai nīl muṭiyāṉ oli nīr ulakāṇṭu kār aravak kaṭal cūḻa vāḻum patiyām Kalikkāmūr".*[193] This *Kalikkamūr* is a city on the sea coast founded by a *Kalikkāmaṉ,* anterior to this *Ēyarkōṉ,* as it is sung by *Campantar* who must have lived at least a generation before *Ārūrar.*

Ārūrar refers to this *Ēyarkōṉ* in another place, the *Tiruppuṉkūr hymn,* already referred to: *"Ēta naṉṉilam (Ētamil nilam?) īraṟu vēli Ēyarkōṉ uṟṟa irumpiṇi tavirttu"*[194] — 'You have removed the great ailment from which suffered that *Ēyarkōṉ* of 12 *vēlis* of land of no fault'. The reference to the 12 *vēlis* has been referred to in the previous verse of this *hymn.*[195] 'The whole world forgot the rains. There is no water in the fields. We will give you a big plot of land. Save us'. This was said. 'The white clouds of lustre spread all round. There was a great flood. This danger was also averted. God received again 12 *vēlis* of land. Seeing this act of Grace, I have taken refuge in your feet, O, Lord of *Tiruppuṉkūr'*. This is the idea conveyed in this verse. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* explains this story as an incident in the life of *Ēyarkōṉ.*[196] He speaks of the Lord getting one set of 12 *vēlis* perhaps for saving the lands from the floods. The *'piḻai'* or fault, mentioned in this verse by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and *'piṇi'* or ailment mentioned by *Nampi Ārūrar* probably refer only to the floods.

The word *'piṇi'* is given its full force in this story of *Ēyarkōṉ* as narrated by *Nampiyāṇṭār* and *Cēkkiḻār.* It is the chronic colic pain from which *Ēyarkōṉ* is said to have suffered. *Ēyarkōṉ* was opposed to *Ārūrar,* because the latter made the Lord his errand-boy, carrying messages to *Paravai.* In order God to bring about a

192. 3:105.
193. *Ibid.,* 8.
194. 7:55:3.
195. 7:55:2.
196. *Kōyil Tiruppaṇṇiyār viruttam,* 54.

reconciliation between these saints, God informed *Kalikkāmar* that *Ārūrar* would cure him of his colic pain. The heroic *Kalikkāmar* preferred to die rather than meet his enemy, and ran a scimitar into his stomach — This is all the story that is found in *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi.*[197] But *Cēkkiḻār* continues: *Ārūrar* as directed by God came to *Kalikkāmar's* place only to learn of his death and he was so much overcome with grief that he attempted to cut away his own head. God brought *Ēyarkōṉ* to life and this saint went to prevent *Ārūrar* committing suicide. Thus these two great saints became very good friends.

The *Dārāsuram* sculpture represents this version of the story. Plate 6, figure 44 gives a copy of the sculpture with the name inscribed as *Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāmāṇṭār.* On the right half we find *Ēyarkōṉ* lying down on a cot with the death inflicting scimitar. On the left half are found two persons, one, *Ārūrar* trying to run his sword into his body and the other, *Ēyarkōṉ,* catching hold of *Ārūrar's* hands and preventing him from committing suicide. The *Sanskrit* and *Kaṉṉada* traditions refer to this saint as *Kalikkāma Nāyaṉār,* the commander of the army of the *Cōḻa* king and the son-in-law of *Māṉakanjaṉadīsa* — two facts mentioned by *Cēkkiḻār* also. This saint is said to have taken a vow not to see the face of *Sundara* (*Ārūrar*) at all costs for the reason that the latter was in the company of prostitutes.

III

The 30th saint is *Tirumūla Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Nampirāṉ Tirumūlaṉaṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"—"I am the servant of the servants of our patron and Lord *Tirumūlaṉ*".[198] Whilst *Ārūrar* describes *Campantar* as *Empirāṉ,* the patron and Lord of his line of school, he describes *Tirumūlar* as *Nampirāṉ,* 'the Lord of us all'. The great work of this saint, the quintessence of *Āgamas* and *Yōga* — *Tirumantiram* — is available. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* states that *Tirumūlar* entered the body of a cowherd of *Cāttaṉūr* and praised *Śiva* according to the *Vēdas.*[199] *Cēkkiḻār* gives a more detailed story. One of the *Vēdic* and *Yōgic* disciples of *Nandi* of *Kailās* after achieving *siddhis* started on a southern tour to meet his friend *Agastya* at *Potiyam* mountain. Worshipping on the way

197. *Tirut. Tiruvantāti,* 35.
198. 7:39:5.
199. *Tirut. Tiruvantāti,* 36.

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at *Tirukkētāram, Nēpalam, Avimuktam, Śrī Parvatam, Kāḷahasti, Ālaṅkāṭu, Ēkāmparam (Kāñci), Tiruvatikai* and *Tillai,* he reached *Āvaṭuturai.* Suddenly an idea struck him. He met a herd of cows in a sorry plight almost in tears standing round the dead body of a cow-herd, *Mūlan* by name, of *Cāttanūr* village. The *yōgi* taking pity on the cows, left his body in a safe place and entered the corpse. The cows were happy at what they thought as the return of their cow-herd. When he returned to the house of *Mūlan,* he refused to cohabit with the wife and when she complained to the people of the village, they advised her not to think of her husband any more as he had become a *yōgi.* When he searched for his old body it had disappeared. He realized that this was God's will and that God had meant that he should sing *Tamiḻ.* He went to *Tiruvāvaṭuturai* to remain in a *yōgic* contemplation under a *Bōdhi* tree giving expression to his spiritual experiences at the rate of one verse a year for 3,000 years whereafter he returned to *Kailās.* His work is called *Tirumantiramālai* or the *Tamiḻ Mūvāyiram.* This *Tirumantiram* was added on as the 10th *Tirumurai.*

This *Tirumantiram,* divided into nine *tantras,* is said to summarize *Āgamas, Tantra* being another name for the *Āgama.* The first *Tantra* brings out the fact that *Śaivism* is an ethical religion. The second *Tantra* explains certain *purāṇic* stories bringing out their mystic significance and describes the five-fold function of *Śiva* and the three classes of *jīvas.* The third *Tantra* gives us the *yōgaśāstra* based on the author's own experience. The fourth is the *Mantra śāstra* explaining *'Ajapa' mantra* and other *cakras.* The fifth describes the different forms of *Śaivism, Śuddha Śaivam, Aśuddha Śaivam, Mārga Śaivam,* and *Kadum Śuddha Śaivam. Aśuddha Śaivam* consists in following certain practices; *Śuddha Śaivam* consists in the realization of the true knowledge; *Mārga Śaivam* is the *Śaivam* of realization; *Kadum Śuddha Śaivam* does not care for external characteristics but goes straight to *Śiva* perhaps like many of the saints of *Periyapurāṇam.* It also explains four *sādhanas* and the *Sat, Sakha, Satputra* and *Dāsa Mārgas.* The sixth describes *Śiva* as *Guru* and the necessity for His Grace. The seventh describes the esoteric *sādhanas* through the six *ādhāras* (*cakras*), *liṅgas* and *yōgamudras.* The eighth refers to the *avasthas* and explains the dawn of divine knowledge and brings out the glory of *Siddhānta* in relation to the other schools of thought. The ninth *Tantra* is an exposition of *samādhi,* or the

final realization, the attainment of *Ākāsa* and the significance of divine dance.

Tirumūlar mentions his nine *Āgamas* as *Kāraṇam, Kāmikam, Vīram, Cintam, Vātuḷam, Vyāmaḷam, Kālōttaram, Supram* and *Makuṭam. Tivākaram* and *Piṅkalantai,* the *Tamiḻ* Lexicons, give the names of some more *Āgamas.* It will be seen that more and more *Āgamas* were becoming popular in the *Tamiḻ* country and from the story of *Meypporuḷ Nāyaṉār,* we learn that *Śaivites* were anxious to discover more and more *Āgamas.* Dr. V. V. Ramana Sastri of *Vēdāraṇyam* sees in the *Tirumantiram,* the *Pratyabhijñā Darsana* of *Kāshmir,* perhaps because of the story of *Tirumūlar* coming from *Kailās,* though he admits *Tirumūlar* must be anterior to *Sōmanātha* and *Abhinavagupta,* the great expounders of *Pratyabhijñā* in *Kāshmir.*[200] As *Tirumūlar* speaks of the six *darsanas* (v. 1530 *etc.*), he must be posterior to the authors (the *ṛṣis*) of these, and also to *Liṅgapurāṇam (vv.* 347-352) and *Vīravātuḷa,* held in great reverence by the *Vīramāhēśvaras,* whose cardinal tenets of *Ṣaḍ Sthala Vivēcaṉa,* are explained in the seventh *Tantra. Tirumūlar* was the first to write these truths in *Tamiḻ*: *"Mūlaṉurai ceyta mūvāyiram Tamiḻ"* (*V.* 99); *"Eṉṉai naṉṟāka iṟaivaṉ paṭaittaṉaṉ taṉṉai naṉṟākat tamiḻ ceyyumāṟē"* (*V.* 81); *"Mālāṅkaṉē iṅku yāṉ vanta kāraṇam Nīlaṅka mēṉiyāḷ nēriḻaiyāḷoṭu mūlaṅkamāka molinta tirukkūttiṉ cīlāṅka veṭattaic ceppa vantēṉē"* (77); *"Nanti iṇaiyaṭi nāṉtalai mēṟkoṇṭu puntiyiṉ uḷḷē pukappeytu pōṟṟiceytu anti mati-puṉai araṉaṭi nāṭoṟum cintai ceytu ākamam ceppaluṟṟēṉē"* (73). *Tirumūlar* refers to the *patṉi* cult (532) and, therefore, must have come after the *Kaṇṇaki* cult had become popular. In describing the temples, he speaks of brick and not of stone (1719, 1720) and, therefore, he must have lived before *Mahēndravarmaṉ I.* Verse 1721 refers to crystal *liṅga* and *Bāṇa liṅga* but these are natural ones as distinct from the chiselled ones. Preservation of temples is according to *Tirumūlar* the duty of the king (515-519). Therefore, he must have lived in an age when kings like *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* had started building temples and endowing them. He also refers to the great sin of speaking ill of *Jñānis* and *aṭiyārs* (537, 538) probably after '*Usāna Saṁhita*' and such other books were written to condemn the *Pāśupatas* and heretics, unfit for commensality, perhaps somewhere

200. His introduction to Mr. M. V. Visvanātha Piḷḷai's edition of *Tirumantiram,* Ripon Press, Madras, 1912.

about the 4th century A.D. In another place *Tirumūlar* speaks of five *Tamil Maṇḍalas* (1646), probably referring to *Cōḻa, Pāṇḍya, Cēra, Toṇḍa* and *Koṅkumaṇḍalas*. Dr. V. V. Ramana Sastry mentioned above fixes the age of *Tirumūlar* as the Sixth century. To prove that *Tirumantiram* is very old, Mr. V. S. Chengalvarāya Piḷḷai has pointed out that *Tirukkuṟaḷ, Nālaṭi* and *Tēvāram* of *Appar, Campantar,* and *Cuntarar,* and *Tiruvācakam* contain echoes from *Tirumantiram,*[201] though we do not find any specific reference to *Tirumūlar* in these works except in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions will make him a *Vaiṣṇavite* of Northern India entering into the corpse of a cow-herd when he wandered through South India. His *Vaiṣṇavite* wife was surprised at his incessant utterance of the word *Śiva* and thought that he had become insane. Having turned out a *Śaivite* he is said to have attained the abode of *Śiva* at the close of his life.

IV

The 31st saint is *Taṇṭiyaṭikaḷ* and the words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Nāṭṭamiku Taṇṭikkum* (*Mūrkkarkkum*) *aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Taṇṭi* of growing eyes (and *Mūrkkaṉ*)'. "Having no eyes he began digging a tank for *Śiva* with the help of a rope to show him the way and the limit; the *Jains* laughed at him and lost their eyes whilst *Taṇṭi* got his eyesight. He is the hero of *Ārūr*" — Thus sings *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* in his *Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti* — *V*. 37. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Daṇḍiyaḍighaṇāyaṉār* or *Daṇḍibhakta* and refer to his digging a well and receiving his eyesight but not to the mocking *Jains* losing their eyes. *Cēkkiḻār's* story is more graphic. The temple tank of *Tiruvārūr* became shorter on its western side because of *Jain mutts,* there. Blind *Taṇṭi* resolved to widen the tank on that side. *Taṇṭi* planted sticks or pegs and a guiding rope across them to mark the straight line of the bund up to which he had to dig. The *Jains* protested saying that innumerable insects would die in the futile attempt of his. Unable to bear the insult, he threw out a challenge that they would lose their eyes, while he would be blessed with eyesight. They accepted the challenge and swore they would vacate the city if he ever received the eye sight and in an angry mood they removed the pegs, the rope and the shovel. God brought the king to interfere and act as a judge. When the

201. P. 45 of Tiruppanantāḷ edition of *Tirumantiram.*

saint received his eyesight his enemies had to vacate the city. It had already been noted that *Taṇṭi* was a contemporary of *Naminanti*. All these stories give us a picture of the *Jaina-Śaiva* conflict of that age. *Taṇṭi* was so called probably because as a blind man he walked with a stick. *Taṇṭi* is a popular name in *South India* for we know that great *Sanskrit* writer *Dandin* belonged to the *Pallava* Court.

V

The 32nd saint is *Mūrkka Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar,* as already mentioned does not give any particulars about the saint except his name. *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him the king of *Tiruvēṟkāṭu,* who gambled at *Kuṭantai* or *Kumpakōṇam* and gave away all the proceeds to *Śaivites*. *Cēkkiḻār* makes him a member of the *Vēḷāṇ* community and we know that the members of the *Vēḷāṇ* community became important as chiefs. According to *Cēkkiḻār* this saint lost all his wealth in feeding *Śaivites* and, therefore, had to proceed to the *Ampalam* in *Kumpakōṇam* for gambling. Because he used his sword freely against those who opposed him perhaps by playing false, he earned the name of *Mūrkka*. *Cēkkiḻār* adds that he did not take a pie of this gambling money for himself. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions know nothing except his gambling and feeding the *Śaivites*. Apart from showing the extent to which the *Śaivites* of *Ārūrar's* age could go to forgive a *Bhakta* and praise him, this story gives a picture of a confused state of the *Tamiḻ* country from *Tiruvēṟkāṭu* in the north to *Kumpakōṇam* in the south.

VI

The 33rd saint is *Cōmācimāṟa Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar's* words, are, "*Amparāṉ Cōmāci Māṟaṉukkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Cōmāci māṟaṉ* of *Ampar*'. *Cōmāci* is another form of *Sōmayāji,* one who has performed the *Sōmayajña* or *Sōma* sacrifice. Therefore, he must be a *Brahmin*. His poper name, therefore, must be *Māṟaṉ* and this shows that *Vēdic Brahmins* bore *Tamiḻ* names like *Māṟaṉ* and they became great *Śaivite* saints. It may be that *Cōmāci Māṟaṉ* had some connection with the *Pāṇḍyas* who were called *Māṟars*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* describes him as a *Brahmin* who would not open his mouth but for *Pañcākṣara* and who was a great friend of *Ārūrar*...*Cēkkiḻār* speaks of his going to *Tiruvārūr* to become a companion of *Nampiyārūrar*. The tradition,

however, went on developing and the later *sthalapurāṇam* gives further details about this saint for emphasizing the *Śaivite* rejection of caste rules — details of which are also referred to in the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions: "*Sōmāsimāṟanāyaṉār* or *Sōmayāji* was a *Brahmin Śaivite* whose sacrificial hall was deserted by all the *Brahmin* priests in a body when in the middle of his sacrifice he fed a *Chaṇḍāḷa Śaivite* and his wife in the sacrificial hall. When, however, *Śiva* appeared in person before the sacrificer, the priests returned and finished the sacrifice, as if nothing happened to pollute it".[202]

202. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, p. 9.

CHAPTER VI

VĀRKOṆṬA VAṈAMULAIYĀḶ CARUKKAM

I

The sixth verse begins with the phrase '*Vārkoṇṭa vaṉamulaiyāḷ*', the name of the *Carukkam* in *Periyapurāṇam* describing the lives of the saints of that verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*. The first saint mentioned in that verse — the 34th saint in the list — is *Cākkiya Nāyaṉār*., *Ārūrar's* words are, "*Vārkoṇṭa vaṉamulaiyāḷ Umaipaṅkaṉ kaḻalē maṟavātu kalleṟinta Cākkiyarkkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of the *Cākkiya* who without forgetting threw stones at the feet of the Lord who shares His body with *Umā* of beautiful sash-bound bosom'. The reference to the Mother Goddess probably had suggested that *Kāñcī* was the place of *Cākkiyar's* worship. *Cākkiyar* means a *Buddhist*[1] but his native place is given as *Caṅkamaṅkai* by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and *Cēkkiḻār* who makes him further a *Veḷḷāḷa*. He came to *Kāñci*, the centre of South Indian *Buddhist* learning from where went *Diṅ Nāga* and *Dhammapāla* and where according to *Maṇimēkalai*, her *Guru*, *Aṟavaṇavaṭikaḷ* resided. He was first captivated by the path of love and *Dharma*. The *Buddhists* emphasize four cardinal truths: (1) *Dukkha* or misery, consisting in the cycle of births; (2) *Dukkhōtpatti*, the cause of the misery, namely, attachments; (3) *Dukkha nivāraṇa*, the removal of that misery, and (4) *Dukkhanivāraṇa mārga*, the way of escape which consists in the non-attachment. *Cēkkiḻār* points out that *Cākkiyar* returned to *Śaivism* realizing the four great categories of *Śaivism*: (1) the actor (*i.e.*, the soul); (2) his acts or the *karma*; (3) the result of the act, and (4) the Lord who gives the results to the actor. When this realization arises, the path of love and *Dharma* became the path of *Śaivism* and he, therefore, turned into the worshipper of *Liṅga*, the symbol of the Absolute. Since everything was *Śiva*, he did not give up his *Buddhist* dress. One day the sight of the *Liṅga* moved him so much that even without realizing what he was doing, he threw, out of love, a stone at it. Next day, at the same place and hour, he

1. 7:15:9.

remembered what he did on the previous day and concluded that he must have been so moved by the Grace of God. He followed this practice as a religious ceremony of his own. One day, he forgot to follow this practice only to remember when he was about to eat. He ran and threw the stone at the *Linga* and God appeared before him at the Heavens. The story might mean that because of the great *Buddhistic* influence over *Kāñci,* our saint was afraid of changing his dress, but the *Śaivite* world had not understood the story that way. Real *Śaivism* was interpreted from this story not to lay the emphasis on the outward show but on the inward love. It is his greatness of never forgetting the Lord that *Appar* emphasizes in referring to this saint, *"Kallināl erintu kañci tāmuṇum Cākkiyanār nellinār cōruṇāmē nīḷ vicumpu āḷavaittār"*:[2] 'That *Cākkiyar* who took his *Buddhist* gruel after throwing the stone, the Lord made him rule the high Heavens without his eating the cooked rice of paddy'. *"Puttan maravātōṭi eri calli putu malarkaḷ ākkinānkān"*:[3] (He is true to those who stand firm in the path of true *Tapas,* and he is false to those who act with an iron heart). 'He made the small piece of stone which the *Buddhist* ran to throw without forgetting Him, the Lord had converted them into fresh flowers'. It is this greatness that *Ārūrar* must be having in his mind. The *Dārāsuram* sculptures represent this saint as a *Buddhist* with one cloth coming from the waist up to the heels, another going over the left shoulder across the chest from the waist upwards. He is seen in the act of throwing a stone at the *Śivalinga* in front of him.[4] The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* versions speak of him as *Sākki* or *Sākya Nāyanār* describing him as a *Brahmin* who embraced *Śaivism* in preference to *Buddhism* in which he believed for a long time and who made use of stones in worship when unable to procure flowers and incense to worship.

II

The 35th saint is *Cirappuli Nāyanār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Cīrkonṭa pukaḷ vaḷḷal Cirappulikkum aṭiyēn"* — 'I am the servant of *Cirappuli* foremost among the munificent patrons of fame'. The name *Cirappuli* is taken as *Sirapuli* by the *Sanskrit*

2. *Ap.,* 49:6.
3. *Ap.,* 266:8.
4. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pl.* 5, *fig.* 43.

and *Kannada* versions and, therefore, translated as *Nirōdha-Śārdūla*, which, therefore, makes him a warrior who entertained all the *Śaivite* saints that went to his house, but what *Ārūrar* emphasizes is his munificence. Therefore, *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him a *Brahmin* leader of *Ākkūr* which, as *Cēkkiḻār* reminds us, was praised by *Campantar for the munificence of its residents.*[5] *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* considers the greatness of the saint to consist in honouring (*Ciṟappu*) the *Śaivites*, thereby suggesting that *Ciṟappuli* was so called because of the '*Ciṟappu*' or honour he paid to the *Śaivites*, '*ciṟa*' being the root of '*ciṟappu*' and '*ciṟap-patu*'. The *Dārāsuram* sculptures represent this story with a picture of three persons one of whom is *Ciṟappuli*, the *Brahmin*, with a sacred thread while the other two are the recipients of gifts from him. The inscription underneath runs as *Siṟappuliāṇḍar.*[6]

III

The 36th saint is *Ciṟuttoṇṭa Nāyaṉār*. The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi mēya Ciṟuttoṇṭark kaṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar of Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi.*' This *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi* is in the *Cōḻa* country. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* speaks of this saint cutting away the body of his only child and feeding the Lord.

Cēkkiḻār gives the story of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* in 88 verses. The saint is said to belong to the '*Māmāttira*' community. *Manusmṛti*[7] speaks of the *Mahāmātras* as great officers of state or chief ministers. Therefore, this saint must have been born in a family of hereditary state officials. According to *Cēkkiḻār* his name was *Parañcōti* and he was an expert in *Sanskrit*, the Science of medicine and in the art of war. All this knowledge, however, made him realize that the feet of the Lord are our final refuge. He led an expedition on behalf of his king against *Vātāpi* (*Bādāmi*) in the north region and razed it to the ground. When he returned victorious, the king learned that he was a great *Bhakta* and begged of him to continue his service to *Śaivism*. So, he returned to his own place, *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi* and worshipped at *Gaṇapatīccura*. His wife was *Tiruveṇkāṭṭu Naṅkai* and both of them made it a point to feed the *Śaivites* before they dined every day. Though he was the greatest man of his time, he was so humble before the *Śaivites*

5. *Camp.*, 2:42.
6. *M. A. R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. IV*, *fig.* 29.
7. 9:259.

that the people began to praise him as *Ciṟuttoṇṭar*. (The word '*Ciṟu*' means small). He was feeling himself very small in the presence of *Saivites*. He was blessed with a child who was called *Cīrāḷa Tēva* and he was sent to school in time.

Śiva came in the form of a *Bhairava* ascetic. His tuft of hair was allowed to flow down freely. Flowers of '*tumpai*' adorned his crown. He had a circular mark of the sacred ash in his fore-head. A circular ear-ring made of the conch shell was dangling in his ears inside each of which was placed the '*cevvarattai*' flower. A neck-lace of crystal beads adorned his neck. He was wearing a black coat or a robe. He was wearing armlets, wristlets, anklets and waistband and garlands — all made of '*rudrākṣa*'. He was wearing the jingling anklet (*cilampu*) in his feet. He was carrying a skull in his left hand and the trident on his shoulders whilst his right hand was making the '*damarukha*' resound. When he came to the house of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar*, the latter was away from his house in search of *Śaivites* to be fed that day. His servant maid *Cantaṉa naṅkai* informed the *Bhairava* of this who, however, said that he could not stay in a place where only women were staying. The wife of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* also begged him to stay but the *Bhairava* stated that he came from the north and he would be staying under the '*ātti*' tree at *Gaṇapatīccuram*.

Ciṟuttoṇṭar, finding no *Śaivites*, returned home with a heavy heart but on hearing of the new-comer, went to the '*ātti*' tree to beg of the *Bhairava* to dine with him. The *Bhairava* told *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* that he used to eat once in six months only, and that, the only child of five years of age of a family. *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* said that it was nothing impossible. Their own child was brought from the school and he was cooked. Whilst cooking, they had thrown out the head of the child, which the *Bhairava* demanded at the time when the food was served. Fortunately, the servant maid was ready with the cooked head and it was also served. The *Bhairava* called upon *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* to bring in, his child to dine with him and ordered them to call the child. The father and mother of the child implicitly obeyed the order and the child came as though coming from the school but by that time the *Bhairava* had disappeared. The Lord appeared with the Mother Goddess and the divine child *Muruka* on the sacred bull high up in the heavens and all the four, the father, the mother, the child and the servant woman were taken to the abode of *Śiva*.

One of the sculptures of *Dārāsuram*[8] represents this. The lower right hand portion represents the holding of the child to be cut and to be cooked. The lower left portion represents the *Bhairava* seated before the food served in front of him and his ordering the child to be called. The upper right half represents the mother calling the child and the rushing in of the child. The upper left half represents *Pārvatī* and *Paramēśvara* on the sacred bull. There is no *Muruka* or child God with *Paramēśvara*.

The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Siṟuttoṇḍaṇāyaṉār* or *Dabhrabhakta*. He is made therein a general of a *Chōḻa* king destroying the fort of *Vātāpi*, capturing its king (*Puḷakēsi* II) alive to be surrendered to the *Chōḻa* king together with an immense quantity of treasure. His son is called *Siriyāḷa* or *Srīlāla*, evidently a corruption of the name *Cīrāḷa*. As in *Periyapurāṇam*, the general is said to have slain and offered his son's flesh to a *Śaivite* guest whilst *Śiva*, pleased at this restored the son to life again.

The story of the horrible dinner is referred to by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*.[9] *Paṭṭiṉattaṭikaḷ* mentions this in his *Kōyil Nāṉmanimālai:*[10] "*Niṉmutal vaḻipaṭat taṉmakaṉ taṭinta toṇṭar maṉaiyil uṇṭal pōṟṟi*". Therefore, this story must have been popular even before the times of *Nampiyāṇṭār* and of *Paṭṭiṉattār*. Details of the preparation of this food according to Dr. Rajamanikkam have been taken by *Cēkkiḻār* from *Tillai Ulā*.[11] This work is not completely available. Late Mr. Ulakanātapiḷḷai having printed[12] the portions which he had secured we have in two places, the story of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* referred to. 158th *kaṇṇi* runs as follows:

> "*Muṭittoṇṭaṉ*
> *Koṇṭirunta pālakaṉai kūcāmal kūṟākkak*
> *Kaṇṭirunta ceṅkamalak kaṇmūṉṟum*".

'The three red lotus-like eyes which without any shudder were looking at the crest jewel of a *Bhakta* cutting to pieces his own child'. The next reference occurs in the description of the '*maṅkai*' who falls in love with the Lord. The mother despairs of the

8. *M.A.R., Pl.* 5, *fig.* 42.
9. *Tirut. Tiruvantāti,* 43.
10. *V.* 40, *lines* 29-30.
11. *Periyapurāṇa Ārāicci-Tamil,* page 190.
12. In *Tamilppoḻil, Vols.,* 12 and 13,

cruel hearted *Śiva* ever returning the love of her child. *Kaṇṇis* from 197 to 202 run as follows:

> "*Mātavam ceytiruntu vāḻvār akattiṟpōy*
> *Pātakam ceyta pavaḷamum—Kātalittup*
> *Peṟṟōr piṭittariyum piḷḷaikāṟ pūccataṅkaic*
> *Ciṟṟōcai kēḷāt tirucceviyum—Peṟṟōr*
> *Ciṟucantu meṉkuṟaṅku ceytārkaḷ eṉṟum*
> *Karikaṇṭu kūcāta kaṇṇum—Piṟavitaṉil*
> *Paṟṟilōrk kellām paṭaikkum talai iṟaiccip*
> *Peṟṟilōm eṉṉum perumpaciyum—Caṟṟiraṅka*
> *Vaṉṉeñca mumuṭaiyāṉ valviṉaiyēṉ peṟṟeṭutta*
> *Aṉṉam paṭuva taṟivarō—Muṉṉam*
> *Arinta makavai aḻaippittār—Mīṇṭum*
> *Purintu nakaiceytu pōṉāṟ*".[13]

'He is the Lord, of those ruddy feet which once upon a time walked along '*Ceṅkōṭu*' with the bemoaning anklets resounding all round of the coral (lips) which performed the great sin (*i.e.*, asking for the flesh of the child) in the house of the people of self-sacrifice, of the beautiful ears, which turned deaf to the wee little twinkling of the bells adorning the tiny feet of the child which was cut to pieces by his own parents full of love, of the eyes which never shuddered to look at the dish of the soft thigh and tiny joints cooked by the parents, of the great hunger, regretting that the head had not been secured as food, of the hard heart never relenting even for a moment. Will He know the sufferings of my child, He who made them call the very child which they had cut into pieces, He who again laughed and went His way'?

Even in this *Ulā*, there is no reference to the servant-maid *Cantaṉa naṅkai* and her preparing or cooking the head and having it ready for the *Bhairava*. Therefore, it can't be said that all the details found in *Cēkkiḻār* are traceable to this *Ulā;* nor, it is correct to say that this *Ulā* is anterior to *Kulōttuṅka II*. Dr. Rajamanikkam is certainly wrong in assuming that there is no reference to this king who, he thinks, was a contemporary of *Cēkkiḻār*. The 65th *kaṇṇi*[14] refers to the *Cōḻa* who gave *Viṣṇu* the blue sea for sleeping therein and we know that it was *Kulōttuṅka II* who threw the image of *Govnidarāja* of *Citamparam* into the blue

13. *Kaṇṇis*, 197-202.
14. *Vol.*, 12.

sea. These considerations conclusively prove that this *Ulā* belongs to the age of *Kulōttuṅka II*. *Caṇḍēśvara* is believed in the *Śaivite* tradition and *Āgamas* to perform the festival of *Śiva*. The actual person performing the festival usually stands by the side of *Caṇḍēśvara* as his agent and servant. The same idea, is brought out in the 65th and 66th *kaṇṇis*, *"Taṇṭuḻāy mālai tikiri marakatamēkam tuyila nīlak kaṭalaḷitta nēriyaṉum mēloru nāḷ, tantai iru tāḷ tuṇitta kait tirumuṉiyum vantu caraṇa malar pōṟṟa"*.

Though *Paṭṭiṉattār* and *Nampiyāṇṭār* knew about the tradition of this horrible dinner, the verses of *Ārūrar* and *Campantar* are silent about this incident. *Campantar* was a contemporary of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* and we have his *hymn* on *Gaṇapatīccuram* built by *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* at *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi*. The very phrase which *Ārūrar* has in his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*, *"Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi mēya Ciṟuttoṇṭar"* is bodily taken out from the opening verses of *Campantar's hymn*, *"Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi mēya Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ paṇi ceyya"*.[15] The *Gaṇapatīccuram* temple is called *Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ Gaṇapatīccuram*, leaving no doubt in our mind that the temple was built by *Ciṟuttoṇṭar*. *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* is said to serve the Lord in the temple. He is a *'śiṣṭa'*[16] — 'an eminent and distinguished man — educated and disciplined and a model unto others'. He is *"Cīrc Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ"*[17] —*'Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ* of great fame'. He is *"Cīrulāñ Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ"*[18] and *"Cīrāḷaṉ Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ"*[19] which phrases again emphasize his great fame. The tradition tells us that the name of the child was *Cīrāḷaṉ*. Are we to take *Cīrāḷaṉ Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ* as meaning *Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ*, the son of *Cīrāḷaṉ* in which case the child may be assumed to have borne the name of his grandfather ? Or, the word *Cīrāḷaṉ* may be interpreted as referring to the Lord of the temple, for we know the Lord there, was called *Cīrāḷadēva*. *Campantar* calls him *"Ciṟappulavaṉ Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ"* *'Ciṟuttoṇṭaṉ* the pre-eminent scholar'. *'Ciṟa'* should be the contracted form of *'ciṟappu'* or rather the root *'ciṟa'* itself must have been separately used in the age of *Tēvāram* — *Ciṟappuli Nāyaṉār*, *Ciṟappāṭu*. It is this which must have suggested to *Cēkkiḻār* all these references he makes to *Ciṟut-*

15. 3:63:1.
16. *Ciṭṭaṉ*, 3:63:3.
17. 3:63:3.
18. 3:63:5.
19. 3:63:8.
20. 3:63:9.

tontar's learning. He is again shining with the burnt up ashes on his chest — *"Venta nīru aṇi mārpan"*.[21]

We get a glimpse of *Ciruttoṇṭar's* warrior's life and of his battles in *Campantar's hymns*: *"Kannavil tōḷ Ciruttoṇṭan"*[22]—'His shoulders were as strong as the rock or mountain;' *"Ceruvaṭi tōḷ Ciruttoṇṭan"*[23]—'The shoulders that were chosen as the best in the battle field'. His princely life when he was a commander is also referred to by the reference, *"Tēnamar tārc Ciruttoṇṭan"*[24] — *'Ciruttoṇṭan* of the garlands bubbling with honey'. In another *hymn* on *Gaṇapatīccuram,* he speaks of the Lord residing in the temple of *Gaṇapatīccuram* to bless *Ciruttoṇṭar* who enjoys the sacred ashes: *"Poṭi nukarum Ciruttoṇṭar"*.[25] In that *hymn, Campantar* describes the festival of *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi.* One wonders whether the description of the Lord in the third verse that is responsible for the description of the *Bhairava* coming to test *Ciruttoṇṭar* though there is nothing to justify this tradition:

"Varantaiyān cōpurattān mantirattān tantirattān
Kirantaiyān kōvaṇattān kiṇkiṇiyān kaiyatōr
Cirantaiyān Ceṅkāṭṭaṅ kuṭiyān ceñ caṭaiccērum
Karantaiyān veṇṇīrrān Kaṇapatīc carattānē".[26]

Appar does not mention *Ciruttoṇṭar* specifically. But when he speaks of *"Uriya pala toḻil ceyyum aṭiyār taṅkaṭku ulakamelām muḻutaḷikkum ulappilāṉai"*[27]—'The Lord who gives the whole world to his followers who do his varied services'; one may not be wrong in interpreting this as an implied reference to the victor of *Vātāpi.* Thanks to the *Tamilian* contact with the *Cāḷukyas,* the *Gaṇapati* worship had come to stay. Appar thus refers to this worship: *"Palapala kāmattarākip pataittelu vārmaṉat tuḷḷē, Kalamalak kiṭṭut tiriyum Gaṇapati eṉṉum kaḷirum"*.[27a] If there was anything as extraordinary as the story mentioned in the tradition was known to *Campantar,* he would certainly have mentioned it in his *Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi hymn.*[28]

21. 3:63:11.
22. 3:63:2.
23. 3:63:7.
24. 3:63:4.
25. 1:61:10.
26. 1:61:3.
27. *Ap.,* 298:9.
27a. *Ap.,* 2:5.
28. 3:63.

A word may be said about the phrase *Ciṟuttoṇṭar,* which reminds us the phrase of *Nammāḻvār, "Ciṟumāmaṉicar".*[29] It may refer to those *Bhaktas* who in spite of all their learning and greatness come to perform all kinds of humble services. This phrase must have been very popular in the age of *Campantar*. He refers in four places to those humble souls of his times worshipping at *Ālaṅkāṭu, Kaḻukkuṉṟam, Karukāvūr* and *Kuṟṟālam*: *"Vaṇaṅkum ciṟuttoṇṭar vaikal ēttum vāḻttu"*[30]—'They bow down and praise the Lord every day'; *"Ēttum ciṟuttoṇṭar uḷḷamellām uḷki niṉṟaṅkē uṭaṉ āṭum kaḷḷam vallāṉ"*[31]—'They think of Him and He becomes one with them almost stealing into their heart'; *"Paḻakavalla Ciṟuttoṇṭar"*[32]—'They can move freely with any one'; *"Ciṟuttoṇṭīr"*:[33] In this last place (*Kuṟṟālam*), he addresses the worshippers as '*Ciṟuttoṇṭīr*' whom he calls in other verses of that *hymn* as *'namaraṅkāḷ', 'aṭiyīrkāḷ', 'periyīrkāḷ', 'toḻuvīrkāḷ', 'paṇivīrkāḷ'*. Therefore, we may take it that our saint was great for his humility in serving the Lord and his followers.

The age of *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* has been fixed with the help of the references in *Periyapurāṇam* to the conquest of *Vātāpi. Puḷakēsin II* was the natural enemy of the *Pallavas*: the *Aihole* inscription enumerating the exploits of the *Chāḷukya* king speaks of the *Pallava* king vanishing behind the walls of *Kāñci*. The *Kāsakuṭi* plates speak of a *Mahēndravarmaṉ's* victory at *Pullalūr,* now *Pallūr*. Whatever that may be, there is not the slightest doubt that the *Chāḷukyas* began to invade the *Pallava* country as soon as *Narasiṁhavarmaṉ,* the son of *Mahēndravarmaṉ I* came to the throne. The *Kūram* plates speak of a *Narasiṁhavarmaṉ* defeating *Puḷakēsiṉ* at *Pariyaḷam, Maṇimaṅgalam* and *Suramāra. Narasiṁhavarman's* army pursued the *Chāḷukya* king to his very capital *Vātāpi*. The *Vēḷur Pāḷayam* plates speak of *Narasiṁha* capturing the *Jayasthambha* in the very centre of *Vātāpi*. That this is not a vain boast is proved by an inscription found at *Vātāpi* itself, which speaks of *Mahāmalla Kṣhitibhujam Agrēsara Pallava Siṁhavishṇu.*[34] Therefore, the capture and pillage of *Vātāpi* by *Ciṟut-*

29. 8:10:3.
30. 1:45:7.
31. 1:103:6.
32. 3:46:3.
33. 1:99:5.
34. *Ind. Ant. Vol. IX*, page 199.

toṇṭar are referred to in *Periyapurāṇam* as historical facts. This capture of *Vātāpi* is said to have occurred somewhere about 642 A.D. But Prof. M. Raghava Aiyangar, to make *Tirumaṅkaimaṉṉar* a contemporary of *Ārūrar,* if not of *Campantar* as mentioned in the *Guruparamparā prabhāvam,* makes *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* a commander-in-chief of *Paramēśvara* I and Mr. M. S. Ramaswamy Aiyangar will therefore make *Mahēndravarmaṉ II,* the *Pallava* king who was converted by Appar.[35] According to *Kailāsanātha* temple inscription[36] *Paramēśvaravarmaṉ I* seems to have led another invasion against *Vātāpi* (*Bādāmi*). The Gadval plates of *Vikramāditya I,* the son of *Puḷakēśi* gives the date as 26th April 674 and the counter attack of *Bādāmi* must have followed sometime thereafter. Mr. Nīlakaṇṭa Sastry in his *Pāṇḍyan* kingdom proceeded on the basis that *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* was the commander-in-chief of *Narasiṁha I.*[37] But in his latest book "History of India, Part I" he changes his views and feels that *Ciṟuttoṇṭar* was a commander of *Paramēśvara* I. The following is according to him the summary of the events:

"*Vikramāditya* renewed the contest with the *Pallavas* and entered into an alliance with *Arikēsari Parāṅkuśa Māṟavarmaṉ* (670-710), the fourth king of the restored *Pāṇḍya* line. The *Gaṅgas* of Mysore were also allied to *Vikramāditya* who inflicted a defeat on *Mahēndravarmaṉ II* and advanced to *Kāñchi* early in the reign of his successor. *Paramēśvara's* attempt to stop the invasion in the *Gaṅga* country failed, and in the battle of *Vilande, Bhūvikrama,* the *Gaṅga* ally of the *Chāḷukya,* seized from the *Pallava* king a valued necklace containing the gem *Ugrōdaya.* At the same time the *Pāṇḍya* advanced from the south, and *Paramēśvara* seeking to dispose of him first, met with fresh defeats in the battles of *Nelvēli* and *Saṅkaramaṅgai* in the southern marches of his kingdom. *Vikramāditya* pursued him there and encamped at *Uṟaiyūr* on the banks of the *Kāvēri.* Undaunted by defeats, *Paramēśvara* effected a diversion by sending an army under *Parañjōti alias Siṟuttoṇḍar* into the heart of the *Chāḷukya* kingdom to threaten *Bādāmi* itself, and ended campaign with a resounding victory against his enemies at *Peruvaḷanallūr* in the Trichinopoly district".[38]

35. *Studies in South Indian Jainism,* p. 66.
36. *S.I.I., Vol., I,* page 13.
37. *P.* 54.
38. History of India, Part I, pp. 226-227.

But unfortunately the reasons are not clear to us. The references in *Periyapurāṇam* to the razing of *Vātāpi*[39] seem to suggest that it was the expedition during the reign of *Narasiṁha I*, rather than that of *Paramēśvara* that is referred to. For, we do not hear of any such great havoc happening at *Bādāmi* at the time of the second expedition. If we rely upon *Periyapurāṇam*, we could not say that the *Pāṇḍya Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟaṉ'* won the battle at *Nelvēli* against the *Pallava* as already explained when we were discussing the life of this *Pāṇḍya*. In any case, after all, there is only a difference of 40 years (642-674) and we may not be wrong in assigning the middle of the seventh century to *Ciṟuttoṇṭar*.

The note on the *Tirucceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi* by the Epigraphist is very illuminative. It runs as follows:

"With the supernatural elements eliminated, there is reason to believe that the incidents in the life of the saint as described in the *Periyapurāṇam*, largely admit of epigraphical verification. On the strength of the statements that *Siṟuttoṇḍa Nāyaṉār* met *Tiruñāṉasambandar* personally and took part in the capture of *Vātāpi* (*i.e. Bādāmi* in the Bombay Presidency), Mr. Venkayya has shown that the two devotees must have been contemporaries of the *Pallava* king *Narasiṁhapōtavarmaṉ I*, who 'reduced to dust the city of *Vātāpi*' and flourished in the first half of the seventh century A.D. Epigraphical reference to *Siṟuttoṇḍar*, known so far, occurs in an inscription of *Rājēndra Chōḷa I* from the *Rājarājēśvara* temple at *Tanjore*.[40] This record registers the setting up of copper-images of *Siṟuttoṇḍa-Nambi*, his wife *Tiruveṇgāṭṭu Naṅgai* and their son *Sīrāḷadēva*. *No.* 65 *of Appendix C*, found on the west wall of the *Gaṇapatīśvara* shrine in the *Uttarāpatīśvara* temple at *Tiruchcheṅgāṭṭaṅguḍi*, is dated in the third year of an unspecified *Rājakēsarivarmaṉ* and records a grant of land for two perpetual lamps to *Sīrāḷadēva*. It is not possible to say who this *Rājakēsarivarmaṉ* may have been. The record has on palaeographical grounds, to be ascribed to the time of *Rājarāja I*, who in his earlier records, invariably appears under the name *Rājarāja* — *Rājakēsarivarmaṉ*. Two other epigraphs from the same place,[41] both dated in the 19th year of *Rājarāja I*, add further information about *Sīrāḷa*. The former registers a grant of land for feeding in the *maṇḍapa* of

39. *Vaṭapulattu Vāṭāviṭ toṉṉakaram tukaḷāka-Cirut.*, 6.
40. *S.I.I., Vol. II, p.* 172.
41. *Nos.* 57 and 59 of *Appendix C.*

Siṟuttoṇḍa-Nambi, all the *Śaiva* devotees who gathered to witness the *Sittirai* festival of *Sīrāḷdēva.* The latter provides for festivities in honour of *Siṟuttoṇḍa-Nambi* who was rendering devotional services to the gods *Mahadēva-Sīrāḷadēva* and to *Vīrabhadra.* From these it becomes plain that, in the temple at *Tiruchcheṅgāṭṭaṅguḍi,* in the time of *Rājarāja I,* there was a shrine or *maṇḍapa* dedicated to or called after the devotee *Siṟuttoṇḍa-Nambi* and that *Sīrāḷadēva* was the name of the god *Mahādēva* in the chief shrine of the temple. The two shrines in the temple at *Tiruchcheṅgāṭṭaṅguḍi* are now called *Uttarāpatīśvara* and *Gaṇapatīśvara.* The *maṇḍapa* of *Siṟuttoṇḍa,* which must have been located inside the temple *prākāra,* is no longer pointed out, — the only modern structure answering to this name being situated outside the temple. *Gaṇapatīśvara* is a *liṅga-shrine* on which the early *Chōḷa* inscriptions of the temple are engraved. *Uttarāpatīśvara* bears later *Vijayanagara* records and contains a metallic image of *Bhairava,* which possibly represents the *Vīrabhadra*-form of *Śiva* referred to in No. 59 quoted above. This figure of *Vīrabhadra* is perhaps, to be connected with the *Kāpālika* form, in which *Śiva* appeared to *Siṟuttoṇḍa Nāyaṉār,* as stated in the *Periyapurāṇam. Uttarāpatīśvara* must also have been a later name coined from the fact recorded in the story, *viz.,* that the *Śiva* (*Bhairava*) who manifested himself before *Siṟuttoṇḍa* came from the northern country (*Uttarapādha*). According to Nos. 71 and 76 of *Appendix C. Uttarāpati Nāyaka* received worship in the shrine (*tirumāḷigai*) of *Siṟuttoṇḍa Nāyaṉār.* Consequently, we may have to suppose also that the present shrine of *Uttarāptaīśvara* is identical with the original *Siṟuttoṇḍa-Nāyaṉār-tirumāḷigai* and that *Sīrāḷadēva,* as stated already, was the name of *Gaṇapatīśvara* after whom the young *Sīrāḷa* of the *Periyapurāṇam* story was, evidently, named. It is, however, difficult to explain how *Tirujñānasambandar* of the first half of the 7th century A.D. selected to call the place *Gaṇapatīchcharam,* while later records of the 10th and 11th centuries named it either *Paramēśvara* or *Mahādēva-Sīrāḷadēva* of *Tiruchcheṅgāṭṭāṅguḍi.* The name *Uttarāpati-Nāyaka* appears for the first time in No. 64 of *Appendix C,* which is dated in the 45th year of *Tribhuvanachakravartin Kulōttuṅga-Chōḷa.* In the absence of the characteristic titles of *Rājakēsarivarmaṉ* and *Parakēsarivarmaṉ,* this inscription will have to be referred either to *Kulōttuṅga I* or *Kulōttuṅga III* both of whom enjoyed long reigns. From palaeography, however, we have to decide that the inscription refers to the 15th year of *Kulōttuṅka III* though his latest date,

from inscription examined so far, is 40. I have suggested in my last year's report[42] that *Sēkkiḻār,* the author of the *Periyapurāṇam,* must have been a contemporary of *Kulōttuṅka II Aṉapāya.* It is, therefore, right to expect the name *Uttarāpati Nāyaka* which is based upon the story of the *Periyapurāṇam,* to occur for the first time in an inscription of *Kulōttuṅka III.* Consequently there is full reason to suppose that the present *Uttarāpatīśvara* shrine at *Tiruchcheṅgāṭṭaṅguḍi* must have risen to prominence under that name in the latter part of the reign of *Kulōṭṭuṅka Chōḷa III, i.e.,* about the beginning of the 13th century A.D. It may be noted incidentally that in the temple at *Tiruchcheṅgāṭṭaṅguḍi,* there is also a minor shrine dedicated to *Vātāpi Gaṇapati.* The epithet *Vātāpi* reminds one of the military expedition of *Parañjōdi* (later on called *Siṟuttoṇḍar*) against *Vātāpi,* as related in the *Periya-purāṇam".*

IV

The 37th saint is *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār Nāyaṉār.* In some manuscripts of *Periyapurāṇam,* the name is found as *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Kārkoṇṭa koṭaik Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟi-vārkkum aṭiyēṉ"* —'I am the servant of *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār,* munificent like the cloud'. *Nampiyāṇṭār* states that *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār* was a *Cēra.* He is also called *'Teṉṉarpirāṉ'* — 'the Lord of the Southerners, of the *Tamils',* in the sense in which *Ārūrar* often uses the term. There are only two incidents in the life of this saint that *Nampiyāṇṭār* mentions. One is that this *Cēra* king saw a washerman full of fuller's earth (*Uḻamaṉ*) as though appearing as besmeared with sacred ash. He fell down at his feet. The washerman prostrated saying that he was a *dhobi* servant of the *Cēra.* The *Cēra* continued worshipping him stating that he himself was the slave of the *Śaivite Bhaktas.* The other incident is that when *Śiva* gave *Ārūrar* an elephant for reaching *Kailās,* this *Cēra's* horse overtook it. *Nampiyāṇṭār* also praises his own mind for becoming a servant of this brave saint who had conquered the warrior of the sugar-cane bow. In another place also he refers to the good path traversed by *Ārūrar* and *Villavar* or *Cēra* on an elephant and the horse respectively.

Cēkkiḻār gives us an elaborate version of the story of the saint connecting it with the story of *Ārūrar. Malaināṭu* or the

42. *P. 67, paragraph 27.*

Cēra country where the *Śaiva* temple of *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* is situated along with the capital city of the *Cēras, Koṭuṅkōḷūr*—the modern *Cranganore,* is first described. The *Cēras* were also known as *Kōtai* and their city *Makōtai.* In this family of the *Cēras* was born *Perumākkōtaiyār.* He was doing service at *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* when *Poṟaiyaṉ* the *Cēra* king abdicated the throne to become a *tapasvin.* The ministers approached the *Śaivite* member of the family worshipping at the temple *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* with the request that he should become their king. He, however, wanted first to ascertain the will of the Lord and the Lord blessed him with (1) Sovereignty, (2) Loving service unto the Lord, (3) Knowledge of understanding whatever the men, beasts and the rest might say, (4) Unrivalled Power of victory, (5) Munificence, (6) Weapons and (7) *Vāhanams, i.e.,* carriages and animals for riding. He, thereafter, agreed to be crowned. Whilst ruling thus the incident of the washerman occurred.

Along with the *Cōḻa* king and the *Pāṇḍya,* he formed the triumvirate of *Tamiḻ* kings, conquering the internal and external enemies and ruling the world in such a way that the brilliance of the sacred ash glowed all the more gloriously. He realized, the greatest Royal happiness and wealth were but the feet of the Lord of *Tillai* of *Citamparam.* The Lord made this king hear the jingling sound of the anklet of His feet whilst dancing every day, at the end of his worship.

The next incident is the presents this *Cēra* gave away to *Pāṇapattirar.* This great *Pāṇa* was devoted to the Lord of *Tiruvālavāy* or *Madura,* whom he worshipped with musical compositions. One day, the Lord appeared in his dream to say that a letter directing the *Cēra* to present him with gold, silk and precious gems would be given to him. This letter in the form of a poem is found as the first verse of the eleventh *Tirumuṟai.* When *Pāṇapattirar* went with this letter of introduction to the *Cēra,* he was received with all devotion and the presents already described were given, along the *Cēra* kingdom and sovereignty which the *Pāṇa* begged the *Cēra* to be taken back.

The next incident is that one day when the *Cēra* failing to hear the jingling sound of the anklet of the dancing feet of the Lord went to commit suicide, the sound came to be heard. On begging the Lord to explain this delay, He told the *Cēra* that He was so much engrossed in the *hymn* just then sung by *Ārūrar* at *Citam-*

param that He forgot to dance and make the jingling sound to be heard by the *Cēra*. The *Cēra* at once became desirous of visiting *Tillai* and meeting *Ārūrar*. After worshipping at *Tillai*, where he composed *Ponvaṇṇattantāti*, he went to *Ārūr*, where *Ārūrar* received him with all love and honour. There, the *Cēra* composed *Tiruvārūr Mummaṇikkōvai*. The *Cēra* and *Ārūrar* went on a pilgrimage to the temples in the *Pāṇḍya* country. At *Maturai* where the *Cōḻa* king was staying as the son-in-law of the *Pāṇḍya* all the three ancient kings of *Tamiḻ* land and *Ārūrar* met together. From there *Ārūrar* and *Cēra* returned to *Ārūr*. The *Cēra* king went to his own capital along with *Ārūrar* through *Aiyāṟu* and the *Koṅku* country. *Ārūrar* was given a Royal reception and when *Ārūrar* wanted to return to his country, the *Cēra* sent his presents through his servants which were however robbed at *Tirumurukaṉpūṇṭi*. *Ārūrar* returned to *Tiruvārūr*. At the same time *Ārūrar* started on his pilgrimage to the *Koṅku* country to meet his old friend the *Cēra*. After meeting his friend he went to worship at the temple at *Tiruvañcaikkaḷam* and a white elephant was sent to take him back to *Kailās*. *Cēramaṉ* followed him on his horseback uttering the *Pañcākṣara* in its ears, but his followers unable to bear the separation committed suicide. Both of them reached *Kailās* welcomed by the Lord and the work *'Tiruvulāppuṟam'* composed by *Cēramāṉ* was heard by *Śiva* at *Cēramāṉ's* instance.

Nampiyāṇṭār does not mention anything about the abdication by the previous *Cēra* king. The tradition is that the *Cēra* kings called *Perumāḷs* ruled for a fixed period abdicating the throne at the end of that period. *Cēramāṉ* also had abdicated though under different circumstances We know *Kulacēkarapperumāḷ* also abdicated. It is on the basis of this tradition that *Cēkkiḻār* must be speaking of the abdication of the throne of *Cēramāṉperumāl's* predecessor. The story of this *Cēramāṉ* listening every day the jingling sound of the anklet on the feet of the Lord is not mentioned by *Nampiyāṇṭār*. The *yōgis* are said to hear miraculous sounds. *Māṇikkavācakar* also speaks of hearing the jingling sound of the anklet — *"Vātavūriṉil vantiṉitaruḷip pātaccilampoli kāṭṭiya paricum"*.[43] *Nampiyāṇṭār's* description that he had conquered *'Maṉmata'* makes it clear that this saint never married.

43. *Tiruvācakam—Kīrttittiruvakaval, ll.,* 52-53.

The information about the various works *Cēramāṉ* has composed may be gathered from the 11th *Tirumuṟai* in which they find a place. The references in *Poṉvaṇṇattantāti* are in many cases to the dance of *Śiva* and, therefore, that book has been taken as sung at *Tiruttillai* (*Tillaiccivaṉ*-84) but he also mentions *Maṟaikkāṭu, Ārūr* and *Kaḻukkkuṉṟam..* One of the verses found at the end of *Poṉvaṇṇattantāti* gives us the information about the *'Ulā'* being accepted by the assembly at *Kailās. Tiruvārūr Mummaṇikkōvai* as the name itself suggests might have been sung at *Tiruvārūr.*

Cēkkiḻār tells us that he went through the Heavens or the sky to *Kailās* but the paintings discovered at *Rājarājēśvaram* temple at *Tanjore* give us a picture of a bearded person riding on an elephant with the *'tāḷam'* or cymbal in his hand. This must be *Ārūrar* singing the *hymn* beginning with *"Tāṉeṉai muṉpaṭaittāṉ"* (*H.* 100). Next to him rides *Cēramāṉ* on a horse. In front of him rides *Cēramāṉ* on a horse, with a beard and ornaments. His tuft of hair is flowing whilst that of *Ārūrar* is found knotted to the right. *Cēramāṉ* is turning towards *Ārūrar.* Beneath them are found the waves with fish. This seems to represent the tradition that they took the sea route; *"Āḻi kaṭalaṟiya"*[43a] occurs in the last *hymn* of *Ārūrar* wherein the Lord of the Seas is asked to carry the *hymn* and the information to *Cēramāṉ.* But they might have followed the sea route whilst at the same time flying through the air, even as our modern day aeroplanes do. This painting at *Tanjore* further shows the welcome these saints received at *Kailās* as referred to by *Cēkkiḻar.*

Pūnturutti Nampi Kāṭava Nampi, one of the authors of *Tiruvicaippā,* speaks of *Ārūrar* and *Cēramāṉ* going on a white elephant with their own physical bodies.[44] An inscription of the 32nd year reign of *Rājādhirāja I* speaks of a priest *Nampi Kāṭava Nampi* of *Āttirēya gōtra,* a priest of *Tiruvaiyāṟu,* which is near *Pūnturutti.* One wonders whether this priest is the same as the author of *Tiruvicaippā* referred to above. It is curious that the *Dārāsuram* sculpture represents what it calls 'the *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ katai'* by representing two elephants one after the other on which ride two men, who are taken to be *Ārūrar* and *Cēramāṉ* by some. But the fact, that the person riding on the first elephant is holding

43a. 7:100:10.
44. *Kōyil Tiruvicaippā,* 5,

the Royal umbrella with his right hand and having his face turned towards the person on the second elephant with all regard and respect, raises in our mind a point of doubt whether it will be right on our part to take him as *Ārūrar*.

In our ancient *Caṅkam* Literature in *Tamiḻ*, we hear of the Royal umbrella being carried as the first thing in a procession as a symbol of sovereignty. It is this that is represented by the first elephant on which is found the Royal umbrella. The second elephant carries the king. On the ground, we see four or five people, probably in the act of dancing in that procession. The person riding on the second elephant should, therefore, be the king *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ* taking a procession soon after his becoming the crowned king. So far we can take as representing the first scene. On the left hand side we find two persons standing, one with the hands held above his head in *añcali* pose, whilst the other is bowing down silghtly with the hands held in *añcali* pose near his chest. This reminds us of the first incident referred to by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi,* where *Cēramāṉ* on seeing a *dhobi* worships him whilst the *dhobi* protests saying that he is the slave of the king. How this could be taken as representing the final march to *Kailās* as is done by some[45] is not clear. Even *Nampikāṭava Nampi* must be taken to have mentioned the horse, thanks to what poetry calls the ellipsis; as a poet, he has emphasized the white elephant leaving the horse in our mental back-ground.

The name '*Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār*' has been explained by *Cēkkiḻār* as explaining the gift given by Lord *Śiva* that this king would be capable of knowing all that the beasts, men and birds could express especially their miseries and short-comings in his kingdom. But the word '*Kaḻaṟu*' as found in the old phrase '*Kaḻaṟ ṟetirmaṟai*' means according to the *Tamiḻ* Lexicon, admonition, expostulation or criticism at once, kind and severe. Therefore, the title *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār* will explain the greatness of the king ruling according to *Tirukkuṟaḷ,* with the noble quality of welcoming and seeing through destructive criticism against his rule.[46] In *Nīṭūr,* there was a temple to this saint, which was called, '*Coṉṉavāṟaṟivār Kōyil*'.[47] It is not clear whether this refers to our saint or to the Lord; we

45. Dr. Rajamanikkam-*Periyapurāṇa Ārāicci, Tamiḻ* edition, p. 73.

46. Cf. *"Itippārai illāta ēmarā maṉṉaṉ keṭuppāṟilāṉum keṭum"-Kuṟal,* 448. *and "Itikkum tuṇaiyārai āḷvārai yārē keṭukkum takaimaiyavar"-Kuṟaḷ,* 447.

47. 535/1921.

know *Viṣṇu* was called *'Coṉṉavaṇṇam ceyyum Perumāḷ'*. The folk tales speak of knowing the language of birds and beasts. Probably the conceptions of *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and the folk tales have given us this phrase *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār* emphasizing the important qualification of the ruler according to the hearts of the people.

The next incident is about *Pāṇapattirar*. *Tiruviḷaiyāṭal Purāṇam* also mentions this incident as taking place in the reign of *Varaguṇa I* who is considered to be no other than *Kōccaṭaiyaṉ*, the grandfather of *Varaguṇavarmaṉ*, according to C. V. Narayanaswamy Aiyar.[48] This is an incident which *Nampiyāṇṭār* has not mentioned, but the description by *Ārūrar*, *"Kārkoṇṭa koṭaik Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār"*[48a] 'that he was as munificent as the rain-bearing cloud' suggests that he was a great patron and it is probably this description that necessitated as a tradition of the *Pāṇa* described by *Cēkkiḻar*. We have the *Sanskrit* and the *Kannada* traditions about this *Pāṇapattirar* mentioning him as *Yāḻppāṇanāyaṉār* or *Tirunīlakaṇṭha* and as a musician famous for his devotional songs in praise of *Śiva*. He is said to have received valuable rewards from *Chērama* (*Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ*) king of the *Chēras*.[49] These traditions speak of *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ* or *Chērama*, called also *Mahāgōda*, a *Śaivite* King of the *Chēras* who is said to have visited *Sundara Nambiyār*.[50] As we had already discussed the age of *Ārūrar*[51] we need not repeat the same arguments here; for, after all, *Cēramāṉ* is a contemporary of *Ārūrar*.

In the light of certain facts referred to by us in the portion on the life of *Ārūrar*,[52] one may take the meeting of the three kings at *Maturai* as the meeting of the *Pāṇḍya*, *Cēra* and *Pallava* (*Rājasiṁha*) who had given his daughter in marriage to the *Pāṇḍya Kōccaṭaiyaṉ* whose son was named *Rājasiṁha*, after his grandfather.

V

The 38th saint is *Kaṇanāta Nāyaṉār*. The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Kaṭaṟkāḻik Kaṇanātaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Kaṇanāta* of *Kāḻi*, the coastal town'. *Nam-*

48. *Origin and Early History of Śaivism in South India, Chap. XIII.*
48a. 7:39:6.
49. *Mys. Arch., Rep.*, 1926, p. 10.
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Vol. I.*
52. *Vol. 1.*

piyāṇṭar Nampi suggests that this saint was so called because he became the head of the *Śivagaṇas,* having trained the *'Toṇṭars'* and made them do such acts as befitted them. According to *Cēkkiḻār,* this saint was a *Brahmin,* training the *Śaivites* in performing *'toṇṭus'* like gardening, picking up flowers, making garlands, arranging for the sacred bath of the Lord, cleaning the sacred ground, painting it with the cow-dung, lighting lamps in the temple, writing and reading *Tirumuṟai.* He was so much attached to the sacred feet of *Campantar* that brought him the leadership of *Śivagaṇas.* The worship of *Campantar* by *Kaṇanāta* is a new information which is given only by *Cēkkiḻār.* The *Dārāsuram* sculptures give us a representation of *Kaṇanāta* inscribed as *Gaṇanādāṇḍār kadai.* We see on the left side of the sculpture of this saint, the *'toṇṭars'* or *Śaivite* followers being trained. One is in the act of plucking flowers; another is carrying materials for worship; next come two persons, one of whom sits and explains a book whilst the other standing listens to it with all humility and sincerity. Next comes a person with a broomstick and a pot probably of cow-dung. It is not certain what the person who comes after him does; probably he is lighting a lamp. *Kaṇanāta* stands next, supervising and directing their services. Then follows the final scene on the right half of this sculpture where God appears with *Pārvatī* on the *bull* in the presence of *Kaṇanāta.*[53] The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as a devoted *Śaivite* who took pleasure in feeding and clothing all his *Śaivite* guests and it is curious to note that the traditions make him a contemporary of *Campantar.*[54]

VI

The 39th saint is *Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Ārkoṇṭa vēl Kūṟṟaṉ Kaḷantaikkōṉ aṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of *Kūṟṟaṉ,* the Lord of *Kaḷantai,* of the spear which has captured or which is adorned with *'ātti'* (the *Cōḷa* symbol)'. *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him a *Kaḷappāḷar.* One wonders whether he has taken the word *Kaḷantaikkōṉ* in this sense. The *Kaḷappāḷars* are identified by Prof. M. Raghava Aiyangar with the *Kaḷabhras. Tamiḻ Nāvalar Caritai* refers to *Accuta Kaḷppāḷar,* conquering the kings of the three Royal families (154-157) and he is also called *'Tillai Accutanātaṉ'* reminding us of *Achuta,* the *Kaḷabhra* referred to by *Buddhadatta.* The *Toṇṭamaṇṭala Catakam* speaks of one *Āmūr*

53. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pl.* 5, *fig.* 40.
54. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925.

Kaḷappāḷar, sung by *Kāḷamēkam* (V. 80). *Neṟkuṉṟavāṉar*, the author of *Tiruppukalūr Antāti* is also referred to as *Kaḷappāḷar*. *Meykaṇṭār's* father is also referred to as *Kaḷappāḷar*. *Kaḷantai* is a shortened form of *Kaḷattūr*. It is not clear which *Kaḷattūr* is referred to, as *Cēkkiḻār* does not particularize. *Pāṇṭikkōvai*, quoted in *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ Urai*, mentions the battle at *Kaḷattūr* in which *Neṭumāṟaṉ* was successful. We have a few chiefs of *Kaḷantai*: *Kaḷantai Aḷakapperumāḷ*, *Kaḷantaikkuṭitāṅki*, *Kaḷantaikkōppaṇṇaṉ* and *Kaḷantai Vaccaṇanti*. We have certain scholars and poets like *Jñānaprakāsar*, *Paṭikkācar* and *Pukaḻēnti* referred to as belonging to *Kaḷantai* and in a few cases like that of *Pukaḻēnti*, *Poṉviḷainta Kaḷattūr* in the Chingleput District has been referred to as *Kaḷantai*. As *Meykaṇṭār's* father who is considered to be a *Veḷḷāḷa* is spoken as a *Kaḷappāḷar*, probably all of them belong to the *Vēḷir* group. According to Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar who traces the word *Kaḷabhra* from *Kaḷavar* (whose chieftain is mentioned as *Pulli* in the *Caṅkam* Poetry) or *Kaḷavara*, through the *Kannada Kaḷabaru* — attributes this *Kaḷabhra* invasion to the expansion of the *Śātavāhana* Power driving the *Kaḷavar* further south. The invasion into *Madura* by the *Vaṭuka Karunāṭaka* is probably by the *Kaḷavars* coming through the *Kannada* country. *Kaḷappāḷar*, the protector of the '*kaḷam*' might have become corrupted into *Kaḷappāḷar*. Anyway, we find a number of chiefs who do not belong to the ancient Royal family calling themselves *Kaliyaracar* or the kings of the *Kali* age, as opposed to the kings coming from the more ancient age, ruling the *Tamiḻ* country during the *Kalabhra* interregnum and *Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār* is one of those who reigned the whole of the *Tamiḻ* country in that age.

Nampiyāṇṭār states that *Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār* crowned himself with the feet of the Lord reminding us the *Pādukā paṭṭābhiṣēkam* of *Bharata*. He also imprinted in his mind the Great *Śiva*, and *Nampiyāṇṭār* tells us that this made him the ruler of the world. *Cēkkiḻār* continues the story. *Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār* requested the *Brahmins* of *Tillai* to crown him king. They refused to crown anyone but the members of the *Cōḷa* family and migrated to the *Cēra* country afraid of his power, but leaving one member of the family for performing the worship at *Tillai*. *Kūṟṟūva Nāyaṉār* was very sad and that night he was thinking of the feet of the Lord being given away by God as his crown and in his dream, the Lord did so. Carrying this on his head, he ruled the Southern land. He visited every temple and provided for worship therein.

The phrase '*Ārkoṇṭa*' has been probably interpreted 'adorned with *ātti*' and this has led the *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions to speak of *Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār* as a *Cōḻa.* He is spoken of as *Kūttuva Nāyaṉār* or *Kriṭāntaka.*[55] These traditions continue the story a little more beyond *Cēkkiḻār.* The *Brahmins* of *Citamparam* who migrated to the *Kēraḷa* (*Cēra*) country on hearing Lord *Śiva* blessing this *Kūṟṟuva Nāyaṉār* with the crown of his feet returned and formally crowned him and placed him at the head of the *Śaivites.* The *Dārāsuram* sculptures represent him sitting on the seat whilst two are standing and three are sitting in front of him, all with their hands held in *añjali* pose probably his feudatories paying him the homage.[56]

55. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925.
56. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. V, fig.* 39.

CHAPTER VII

POYYAṬIMAI ILLĀTA PULAVAR CARUKKAM

I

The seventh verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the phrase, "*Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavar*" which is the name of the *Carukkam* in *Periyapurāṇam* where the lives of the saints contained in this verse are described. The first saint of this verse — the 40th saint in the list from the beginning — is *Poyyaṭimai Illāta Pulavar*. The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavarkkum aṭiyeṉ*" — 'I am the servant of the scholar whose service to the Lord is devoid of all deceits'. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* interprets these words as representing the 49 poets of the *Caṅkam* including *Kapilar, Paraṇar, Nakkīrar* who composed many songs on the feet of the Lord of *Tiruvālavāy* (*Maturai*). But this name is not one of the group names specifically mentioned in verse 10 of this *hymn* (39). Whilst all other *hymns* mention only individual saints except for the *Tillai Vāḻ Antaṇar* mentioned at the beginning of the *hymn, Cēkkiḻār* seems to feel the force of the argument and he does not specifically mention the poets of the *Tamiḻ Caṅkam.* The purpose of poetry is the realization of true knowledge and with this conviction *Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavar* took refuge in the feet of the Lord and became famous as a scholar of true service, never singing the praise of any one but the Lord. *Cēkkiḻār* always sings the individual saint in the honorific plural and this has misled some into thinking that he is also referring to a group name. Some feel that *Māṇikkavācakar* is referred to under this name, though others will argue that *Ārūrar* came long before *Māṇikkavācakar* who according to them refers to *Ārūrar* in the lines, "*Tēṉamar cōlait Tiruvārūril ñāṉam taṉṉai nalkiya naṉmaiyum*".[1] The *Dārāsuram* sculptures probably accept the interpretation of *Nampiyāṇṭār;* for, we see there, a number of poets standing between the temple and a *maṇṭapa*.[2] No *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions are available about this saint or a group of saints.

1. *Tiruvācakam, Kīrttittiruvakaval, ll.* 73-74.
2. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. V, fig.* 38.

II

The 41st saint is *Pukaḻccōḻar,* about whom we discussed when describing *Eṟipatta Nāyaṉār.*

III

The 42nd saint is *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiya Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar,* are, *"Meyyaṭiyāṉ Naraciṅka muṉaiyaraiyaṟkaṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of the true servant of the lord *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ'.* In some editions of this *hymn* the honorific plural suffix *'ar'* is found used but terms like *Meyyaṭiyāṉ* and *Ēmpirāṉ* prove conclusively that *Ārūrar* used only the ordinary singular and, therefore, the reading must give not the liquid *'r'* but the explosive *'ṟ'*. This saint used to give gold coins to *Śaivite Tapasvins* but to one who saw the feminine form everywhere he gave twice the gold — this is the greatness of *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ* according to *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi. Cēkkiḻār* explains this further. This saint was the ruler of *Tirumuṉaippāṭināṭu.* He always wore in his mind the greatness of the sacred ashes. On the *Ātirai* day he would honour the *Śaivites,* feed them and give one hundred gold coins each. One *Ātirai* day, a pronounced libertine expressing his lust in every act of his, came besmeared with the sacred ashes. When others slighted him, *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ,* because of the sacred ashes the libertine wore, welcomed him with all humility and gave him twice the gold he usually gave. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Narasiṁhamuṉi,* a *Śaivite* king who adopted *Sundara Nambi* as his son. *Ārūrar* mentions this saint in another *hymn* on *Tiruṇāvalūr* which he describes as the city of the Lord, his own city and the city where *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ* served the Lord with all love and honour.[3] In the *Taṭuttāṭkoṇṭa Purāṇam, Cēkkiḻār* refers to this *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ*[4] bringing up *Ārūrar,* the child. Whilst *Cēkkiḻār* speaks of *Sōmāci Māṟar* and others as contemporaries of *Ārūrar* in their respective *purāṇams,* neither he nor *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* mentions contemporaneity of *Nampi Ārūrar* in this story of *Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ.* Similarly they do not mention that *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* was the contemporary of *Nampi Ārūrar.*

Muṉaippāṭi Nāṭu is the frontier of the *Cōḻa* country. Therefore, this frontier chief was called *Muṉaiyaraiyaṉ.* Probably

3. 7:17:11.
4. *Stanza* 5.

Naracińkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ was a feudatory of the *Pallava* king *Narasiṁha I or Narasiṁha II,* but this name continued to remind the family for many centuries as we find a *Malaiyamāṉ Narasiṁha-varmaṉ* spoken of in the inscriptions of *Kulōttuṅka III.* These chieftains probably belong to the *Malaiyamāṉ* family calling themselves *Milāṭuṭaiyār* and *Cētirāyas.* Some were ruling from *Kiḷiyūr,* others from *Nāvalūr,* still others from *Kōvalūr.* Some of them are named after *Śiva* of *Siddhānta,* whilst others were called *Naracińka.*[5] Some claimed descent from *Ōri* and others from *Kāri;*[6] at the same time as already pointed out, they claimed their descent from the *Purāṇic* Royal families as *Cēti.*

Cētis formed an offshoot of *'Yatus'* according to *Purāṇas.* The *Yatus* extended their authority northward over the *Haihayas* probably after the maritime power under *Kārttavīriya* disappeared.[7] The *Cētis* were first ruling between *Jamuna* and *Vindhyas.* After the fall of the *Mauryas,* one of the members of the *Cēti* Royal family came to rule over the *Kaliṅga,* and *Karavēla* the Great was a *Cēti* ruler. Probably the *Cēti* rulers of the *Tamiḻ* land traced their relationship with this family.

The *Dārāsuram* temple contains a sculpture on its western wall with an inscription, *Naracińkamuṉaiyaraiyar* underneath.[8] This saint with a beard is sitting probably on a *'siṁhāsana'* (chair) in the act of giving probably gold. The person who is receiving it first must be the libertine. There are five other *'Saivite Bhaktas'* to his right. There is somebody standing behind the king. The *M.A.R.* mentioned above states that his queen is behind the king though it is not clear in the plate.

IV

The 43rd saint is *Atipatta Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are *"Viritirai cūḻ kaṭal Nākai Atipattarkkaṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of *Atipattar* of *Nākai,* the seaport surrounded by the expanding waves'. *Nākai* is *Nākappaṭṭiṉam* which was the centre of the seaborne trade and where *Rājasiṁha* built a *Buddhist* temple for the

5. 114/1900, 538/1902.
6. 252/1934.
7. *History and Culture of Indian People* by R. C. Majumdar, *Vol. I.,* pp. 282, 284.
8. *M.A.R., Pl. V, fig.* 36.

use of the traders coming from the eastern islands. *Atipattar* is according to the *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions, *Atibhaktanāyaṉār*, the devotee of great love or *bhakti*, a fisherman whose vow it was to offer to sea, the first fish he got in his net every day, even the first happened to be a golden fish. This is the story given by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* as well, who refers in another place to the Lord accepting even a fish as nectar without slighting it.[9] *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* calls *Atipattar, Poyyili,* probably because he did not break his vow. *Cēkkiḻār* brings about the greatness of *Nākappaṭṭiṉam* and describes the story in great detail. The saint, once the head of the fishermen village, became poor but continued to leave the first fruit of the fish to the Lord. One day he caught a wonderful fish of golden gems enough to purchase the whole world and put an end to his poverty and misery. His followers thought that his troubles came to an end, when, the saint threw it out into the sea for the Lord as the first fruit of the day. This story of sacrifice is very well brought out in the *Dārāsuram* sculpture. On the right hand side of the plate, we see the sea with all kinds of fish including the octopus. Three fishermen are drawing in, the net. *Atipattar* with the golden fish in his hand is in the act of throwing it out into the sea. He has a beard. In the centre stands a person with the turban on his head. Probably it is the starving *Atipattar*. On the left hand side, we see *Śiva* appearing on the bull with *Pārvati* whilst *Atipattar* stands worshipping him, raising his hands above his head in the *añjali* pose.[10]

V.

The 44th saint is *Kalikkampa Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar's* words are, "*Kaitaṭinta vari cilaiyāṉ Kalikkampaṉ* (*Kaliyaṉ Kaḻaṟcatti Variñcaiyarkōṉ*) *aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"—'I am the servant of the servants of *Kalikkampaṉ*, of the beautiful bow cutting away the hand (*Kaliyaṉ, Catti* of the heroic anklets and the king of the citizens of *Variñcai*)'. *Kampaṉ* is the proper name of the *Nāyaṉāṟ*. The epithet *Kali* may mean that he belongs to the family of *Kaliyaracar*. Accordingly, we find the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speaking of him as a king; but, he is made therein a *Cōḻa* king. Probably, the term does not mean anything more than a king of the *Cōḻa* country. He is made the native of *Peṇṇākaṭam* by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and *Cēkkiḻār*. The description,

9. *Kōyil Tiruppaṇṇiyār viruttam* 40.
10. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, Pl. *iv*, *fig*. 35.

'Kaitaṭinta vari cilaiyāṉ' seems to emphasize the fact of his being a ruler of a country or a chieftain. *'Kai taṭinta'* has however been taken to mean that he had cut away somebody's hand. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions along with *Nampiyāṇṭār* speak of him as one who was wont to wash the feet of all the *Śaivite* guests, irrespective of castes and rank and entertain them, and who, when, one of his own servants of low caste appeared as a guest amongst others seeing his wife's hesitation in washing his feet, the saint cut off her hands and washed his feet and entertained him with others.

Cēkkiḻār makes him a member of the *Vaiśya* community. The *Dārāsuram* temple sculpture mentions *Kalikkampāṇṭār katai.* On the right hand half, we have three devotees on raised seats in front of one of whom in the middle the teapoy-like object with probably the food served thereon. *Kalikkampa's* wife is probably serving them. In the centre, we have five vessels placed one above the other, all probably containing food. On the left half, we have another person who must be the erstwhile servant of *Kalikkampar* seated with one leg hanging down. The wife of *Kalikkampar* is hesitating to wash his leg and the saint with the beard is found raising up the sword in the act of cutting off the right hand of his wife. On the left extremity appear *Pārvati* and *Paramēśvara* on the sacred bull.[11]

VI

The 45th saint is *Kaliya Nāyaṉār.* *Ārūrar* mentions only his name. *Nampiyāṇṭār* calls him merely *Kali.* His native place according to *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* is *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* which is near Madras. He was wont to burn a lamp in the temple and when he could not afford it, he sold out everything and worked as a cooly at the oil-mill for performing the service of lighting the lamp without break. *Cēkkiḻār* also refers to him as *Kaliya Nāyaṉār* but speaks of him as *Kalinītiyār* in the last verse of *Kalikkampa Nāyaṉār Purāṇam,* a name, which is also found there in the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions. He is an oil-monger, a *cakkiri,* according to *Nampiyāṇṭār,* and a resident of *Cakkarappāṭi teru* in *Tiruvoṟṟiyūr* according to *Cēkkiḻār.* He was born rich and lit the lamps in the temple all the day. He lost all his wealth and he began to sell oil as a cooly and make some profit for doing his service.

11. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. IV, fig.* 34.

When even this could not be done, he worked at the oil mill as a cooly. On account of many people taking to this work he lost his employment. He made up his mind to sell away his wife, but found no purchaser. Knowing no other way and carrying out services as usual, he thought of using his own blood as oil and began to cut away his own throat when the Lord appeared and caught hold of his hand. One of the *Dārāsuram* sculptures on its right hand half, shows the saint, first working as a cooly driving the bulls and next as a cooly removing the oil from the mill. In the left hand half is the *vimāna* of the temple in front of which stands a series of lights in what appears a pillar, for lighting which with his own blood, the saint is trying to cut away his throat.[12] The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* versions are the following: "*Kalinīti*, a *Śaivite* saint, wont to burn a light before *Śiva* all the night over, went so far as to sell his wife for money to purchase oil for lamp-light. But when no purchaser could be found, he attempted to commit suicide rather than abstain from keeping a light in the temple. *Śiva* is said to have prevented him from doing so".[13] It is clear that this story is very much more developed than what is found in *Nampiyāṇṭār's* version. If one is to take into consideration the context one may be tempted to hold that *Kaliyaṉ* or *Kalinīti* was also a chief or chieftain like *Kalikkampaṉ*, *Śakti* and others mentioned along with him. The word *Kaliyaṉ* reminds us of the name of *Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār*, a *Kaḷavar* chief.

VII

The 46th saint is *Śakti Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar* refers to his victorious heroic anklet and speaks of him as the chief of *Variñcai* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies with a city of that name in the *Cōḻa* country. He belongs according to *Cēkkiḻār* to the *Vēḷāṉ* community. He cut away the tongues of those who spoke ill of the *Śaivites*. That is all what *Nampiyāṇṭār* says. This shows that there were some people who were hostile to the *Śaivites* not only the *Buddhists* and the *Jains* but also some of the followers of *Smṛtis* looking upon the *Śaivites* as heretics unfit to dine with. *Cēkkiḻār* adds that the saint was powerful enough to cut away the tongue suggesting thereby that the saint was *Śaktiyār* because of *Śakti* or power. It looks as though *Cēkkiḻār* is speaking of the weapon *Śakti*, rather than the power but in verse, 4, of this *Purā-*

12. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. IV, fig.* 33.
13. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, *p.* 9.

ṇam, the saint is said to have cut away the tongue with *'katti'*, the sword. It may be suggested that *'catti'* may be the more correct reading than *'katti'* in which case the name *Cattiyār* (*Śaktiyār*) may be explained as one carrying the *'catti'* the weapon. The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions speak this saint as *Śattināyaṉār* or *Śaktinātha* having made a vow to slay all those who were not *Śaivites* (not only those who abused the *Śaivites*).[14] The traditions do not describe the actual slaughter. The name *Śaktinātha* is borne by some *Muṉaiyaraiyar* and it may be that this saint belonged to that family but ruling from *Variñcaiyūr,* whilst other members of the family ruled, as already pointed out, from *Nāvalūr, Kōvalūr,* and *Kiḷiyūr.* It may be pointed out that *'Nātaṉ'* is a name assumed by some *Śaivites* who had attained *siddhi* as explained in *Tirumantiram* while others are called *'Āṇṭār'* like *Nampāṇṭār* and *Śivakāmiyāṇṭār* mentioned by *Cēkkiḻār* and the *Dārāsuram* sculptures. It is curious that the word *Nāyaṉār* is not found though the present editions of *Periyapurāṇam* give the headings as *Nāyaṉār Purāṇams* in spite of the fact that *Nāyaṉār* is not used by *Cēkkiḻār* within the body of the text.

The *Dārāsuram* sculpture[15] represents three persons on the right of *Śaktiyāṇḍār* and one on the left all standing with hands held in *añjali* pose, whilst the insulting tongue of the fourth person standing in front of the saint has been drawn out to cut away by the weapon in the hand of *Śaktiyāṇḍār.*

VIII

The 47th saint is *Aiyaṭikaḷ Kāṭavarkōṉ Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Aiyaṭikaḷ Kāṭavarkōṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ"*—'I am the servant of the servants of *Aiyaṭikaḷ Kāṭavarkōṉ'*. *Nampiyāṇṭār* describes him as a *Pallava* clearly bringing out the meaning of *Kāṭavarkōṉ*. *Aiyaṭikaḷ* will mean, the Lord, the father. The name suggests that the father of the king must have become an ascetic and, therefore, was called *Aiyaṭikaḷ. Nampiyāṇṭār* refers to the conviction of *Aiyaṭikaḷ* that it is better to beg as a servant of the Lord than to rule the world and refers to this saint singing a *veṇpā* each in every temple he visited. We have a work in the 11th *Tirumūṟai* called the *Kṣēttirattiruveṇpā* by *Aiyaṭikaḷ Kāṭavarkōṉ* of which only twenty-four verses are available. The

14. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925, *p.* 9.
15. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pl. IV, fig.* 32.

Sanskrit and *Kannada* traditions are summarized as follows: "*Aiyaḍigal* or *Kāḍavarkōnāyaṉār* was a king of the *Pallava* dynasty ruling in *Kāñchi*. He is variously called *Siṁhāṅka, Pādasiṁha,* and *Pañchapādasiṁha* whose father (rather son, according to inscriptions of the *Pallavas*) was *Bhīma* or *Bhīmavarma* (*A.D.* 550). He spent the whole revenue of his vast kingdom in constructing *Śiva* temples, groves, wells, tanks and feeding-houses".[16] *Cēkkiḻār* speaks of him in greater detail. The following are the points made out by him: (1) This saint first as a king brought under control his enemies and the sufferings of his people; (2) he conquered other lands; (3) the *Vēdic* and the *Śaivite* paths flourished along with *Dharma;* (4) he wanted to serve the Lord through *Tamiḻ* and *Sanskrit;* (5) he was convinced that to be a king was the source of misery and, therefore, abdicated the throne crowning his son, king; (6) he went and worshipped at all the temples of *Śiva* singing one *veṇpā* at every one of them and finally reached *Tillai;* (7) he did all that was necessary for the temple; (8) he was the *Kāṭavarkōṉ* of *Kāñci*—These descriptions are applicable to *Mahēndravarmaṉ II* as explained elsewhere (*Vol. I,* Age of *Nampi Ārūrar*) and that was why he was called the *Aiyaṭikaḷ*. The *Dārāsuram* sculpture gives a *vimāṉa* of a temple in the middle. The story has to be read from left to right of the sculpture. We find *Aiyaṭikaḷ* before abdication with the crown and the flowing cloth. On the right we see him going away without the crown and the flowing cloth.[17]

16. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, *p.* 9.
17. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. IV, fig.* 31.

KARAIKKANṬA CARUKKAM

I

The eighth verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the phrase '*Karaikkaṇṭaṉ*' which is the name of the *Carukkam* or *canto* in *Periyapurāṇam* giving us the lives of the saints mentioned in this verse. The first saint in the verse — the 48th saint in the list from the beginning — is *Kaṇampulla Nāyaṉār*. The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Karaikkaṇṭaṉ kaḻalaṭiyē kāppukkoṇṭirunta Kaṇampulla Nampikkum (Kārikkum) aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Kaṇampulla Nampi*, who took as his armour or protection, the anklet bedecked feet of the Lord of blotted throat (and of *Kāri*)'. Unfortunately, the stories now current about this saint do not bring out either the significance of the word *Nampi* or of the description that he had the Lord's feet as his armour or protection. He was a native of *Irukkuvēḷūr* according to *Nampiyāṇṭār*, which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies as the city on the eastern bank of '*Vaṭa Veḷḷāṟu*'. According to *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*, he became poor in the city and went to *Tillai* where he lighted up the grass for lamps. *Cēkkiḻār* describes him as the saint interested in putting up lamps in the *Tillai* temple and who becoming poor and penniless, cut and gathered '*kaṇampul*' grass which he sold away for purchasing ghee required for the temple. One day, he could not find any purchaser for the grass and, therefore, he burnt away the grass itself as light. Even the grass was not found in required quantity. He, therefore, burnt away his own tuft of hair as the lamp. This extreme service of self-sacrifice described by *Cēkkiḻār* is not mentioned by *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi*, but it is found represented in the *Dārāsuram* sculpture. We have on the right hand edge of the sculpture, the saint with the knotted tuft sitting and holding a lighted up bundle of grass as the lamp. In the centre we see a temple in front of which the saint is bending down his head with the unloosened hair of the head flowing down to be lighted up by the flames of the light below. At the left hand edge is found a person standing with a sacred thread. It is too blurred to be identified. It may be the *Śivagaṇa* form of the saint.

The whole story seems to have been built on the name of *Kaṇampullar* without reference to the other description given by *Ārūrar*. *Ārūrar* speaks of this saint in another place when he gives a list of great men whose faults, the Lord has welcomed as their glories.[1] *Appar* also refers to this saint, "*Eṇṇiṟainta kuṇattiṉālē Kaṇampullaṉ karuttukantār*"[2] — 'The Lord was pleased with the idea or heart of *Kaṇampullaṉ*, because of his innumerable good qualities'. In another place he sings, "*Aruntavatta Kaṇampullark karuḷkaḷ ceytu kātalām aṭiyārkkeṉṟum kuṇaṅkaḷaik koṭuppar-pōlum*"[3] — 'He is the Lord who blessed *Kaṇampullar* of rare *tapas* and conferred good qualities on his loving servants'. Probably, it is this conferring of good qualities, *Ārūrar* speaks of as the Lord enjoying the faults of his servants as their good qualities. These references cannot be to the current story. One would have at least expected the tradition to speak of this saint in contemplation being overgrown with a jungle of '*kaṇampul*' or being saved from the attack of a group of tigers or other enemies. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of this saint as *Kaṇṇampāla* or *Kaṇolapa*, a *Śaivite* who burnt his own hair when the oil and faggots he collected one night for maintaining a light in the temple were exhausted.[4]

II

The 49th saint is *Kāri Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar*, as mentioned above, gives us only the name *Kāri*. This is a name known to *Tamiḻ* Literature from the days of *Malayamāṉ Kāri*, one of the seven *Vaḷḷaḷs* or patrons. In this connection one may note, though *Ārūrar* knows of great men of the *Caṅkam* age like *Pāri*, he does not include any of the *Śaivite* patrons like *Vēḷ Āy* who is famous for the surrender of his precious cloth to God *Śiva*. *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* and *Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavar*, included in the list of saints, however, are considered by some to belong to the *Caṅkam* age. People who bore the name *Kāri* were not only patrons and chieftains but some of them at least were poets like *Maturakavi Māṟaṉ Kāri*.[5] *Kāriyācaṉ* is the author of *Ciṟupañcamūlam* and the author of *Kaṇakkatikāram* is another *Kāriyācāṉ*. The word *Kāri* means

1. 7:55:4.
2. *Ap.*, 226:7.
3. *Ap.*, 49:9.
4. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, *p.* 9.
5. *Vēḷvekkuṭi grant.*

that which is black (*Kāri kataṉañcāṉ — Kalittokai*) or one who is of dark complexion. It occurs as the name of *Aiyaṉār.*[6] The father of *Nammāḻvār* was also known as *Kāri.* It is, therefore, difficult to say who the saint referred to was, a chieftain or a poet. The tradition takes him as a poet probably because by the time the tradition solidified into the present form the name has become associated more with literary men than with chiefs and patrons. But, here also, the details given vary from author to author. *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him a native of *Kaṭavūr,* which *Cēkkiḻār* speaks of as *Tirukkaṭavūr,* probably the place of that name in *Māyavaram* Taluk. According to *Nampiyāṇṭār, Kāri* praised the Lord *Śiva* with words and combination of words which he made beatutiful and upright avoiding all faults. *Cēkkiḻār,* however, speaks of him as composing strings of *Tamiḻ* verses or *Tamiḻkkōvai* which he collected in his name or in such a way as to become famous as his work. The poems were not on *Śiva.* He was moving with the three Royal families of the *Tamiḻ* land with whose costly presents he constructed many a temple for *Śiva,* always thinking of the *Kailās* of the Lord. What *Tamiḻ* works and what temples were known to be the gifts of *Kāri* during the age of *Cēkkiḻār* it is not possible to say. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Kāri Nāyaṉār* or *Kārinātha* constructing a number of *Śiva* temples with the money he collected by begging. The *Dārāsuram* sculpture of the story represents two persons wearing sacred thread in front of a background of mountains. If one is *Kāri,* it is not clear who the other is. The mountains probably remind us of the saint reaching *Kailās* or his travel through various countries.

III

The 50th saint is *Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟa Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Niṟaikkoṇṭa cintayāl nelvēli veṉṟa Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Neṭumāṟaṉ* or *Śrī Māṟa,* the great, of abiding glory, who won the battle of *Nelvēli* because of the subjugated mind'. *Nampiyāṇṭār* speaks of this *Pāṇḍya* as the one in whose presence the *Jains* were defeated by *Campantar* and who impaled them all. He is thus identified with *Kūṉ Pāṇḍya. Campantar* speaks of him as *Teṉṉavaṉ* (the Lord of the south), *Pāṇṭiyaṉ, Pañcavaṉ, Pārttivaṉ*

6. *Taṇḍi-cūtram*-95.

(or the king of this earth), *Koṟṟavaṉ* (the victorious king), *Paṅkamilāṉ* (one who has no blemish), *Paṭṭimaṉ* (one who is learned), *Paraviṉāṉ* (one who worshipped and praised the Lord) and *Bhaktimāṉ* (the king of divine love or *bhakti*). The repetition of the name *Teṉṉavaṉ Teṉṉaṉ* shows probably that he became the undisputed king of the southern land after the *Nelvēli* battle. *Ārūrar* also speaks of *Neṭumāṟaṉ* of sacred ashes on whose crown was *Śiva* as *Teṉṉavaṉ* or *Teṉṉāṉ*, *"Poṭiyāṭu tirumēṉi Neṭumāṟaṉ muṭimēl Teṉṉāṉ"*.[6a] The idea of *Śiva* being on the crown of the *Pāṇḍya* is also referred to by the *Pāṇṭikkōvai* where the author describes this patron *Neṭumāṟaṉ*, *"Naraiyāṟṟakattu veṉṟāṉ muṭimēl niṉṟāṉ Maṇikaṇṭaṉ", Villiṉaṭṭu veṉṟa malliyal tōḷ maṉṉaṉ ceṉṉi nilaviṉāṉ vār caṭaiyaṉ"*. We have elsewhere referred to this idea as being explained by the epigraphists. Therefore, this seems to be a popular idea of *Ārūrar's* age. *"Neṭumāṟaṉ"* is identified with *Arikēsarimāṟavarmaṉ* of the *Vēḷvikkuṭi* grant. *Cēkkiḻār* refers to him as the king who ruled, thanks to *Campantar*, in such a way that *Dharma* and *Śaivism* flourished. He gives the description of the *Nelvēli* fight reminding us almost of the *Kali rhythm* of some of the lines of the *Vēḷvikkuṭi* grant and of the epigraphic description of the *Pallava* war with the *Chāḷukyas* of that age. "The enemies attacked the *Paṇḍya* at *Nelvēli* with a sea of horses and rows of angry elephants. There was a flood of blood in which floated the corpses of man and animal. The *Pāṇḍya* took up the spear even as his great ancestor did to make the sea dry up. The joyful neighing of the horses, the clash of the weapons of the soldiers, the roaring noise of the elephants, the music of the military band resonating like the thunder on the final day of destruction. The *bhūtas* and the *pēys* bathed in the blood and drank that liquor and danced after the feast of the foxes. In such a battlefield, the army of the chief king of the northern country, broke down and fled and the *Pāṇḍya* was crowned with the laurel of victory". This is an information which we do not get elsewhere.

The Vēḷvikkuṭi grant speaks merely of *"Vilvēlik kaṭaṟṟāṉaiyai Nelvēlic ceruveṉṟum"*. *The Siṉṉamaṉūr* plate speaks of the conquest of the *Villavaṉ* being conquered at *Nelvēli*. *Villavaṉ* usually means the *Cēra* but this will be opposed to the specific reference in *Periyapurāṇam*, unless we take the *Nelvēli* there as another battle. Or, the *Villavaṉ* read as *Villavar* may refer to the bow-

6a. 7:38:8.

men who are referred to as *Vilvēli* in the *Vēḷvikkuṭi* grant. *Villavaṉ* may also be a mistake for *Vallavaṉ*, a name which occurs in *Pāṇṭikkōvai*, which may then refer to the *Chāḷukya 'Vallabha'*. From the description given by *Cēkkiḻār*, it is clear that he is referring to the *Chāḷukya* invasion when *Vikramāditya* came as far as *Uragapuri* or *Uṟaiyūr* to be defeated by *Paramēśvaraṉ*, the *Pallava* at Peruvaḷanallūr. There is an intriguing reference in the Smaller *Siṉṉamaṉūr* plates: *"Jayantavarmaṉ makaṉākip pakai pūpar talai paṉippa Paramēśvaraṉ veḷi (c) paṭṭu Arikēsari Asamasaman .... Pāravanipakulam iṟaiñca"*.[7] One wonders whether it refers to *Neṭumāṟaṉ's* conquest of the *Chāḷukyas* before *Paramēśvara* conquered the *Chāḷukyas*. Or, did *Paramēśvara* attack the *Chāḷukya* from behind at *Peruvaḷanallūr* after the *Pāṇḍya* defeated him at *Nelvēli? Nelvēli*, if we are to connect it with the battles around *Uṟaiyūr* and *Peruvaḷanallūr* should be in the *Cōḷa* country; it is probably the *Nelvēli* referred to as being in the *"Teṉkaraippaṉaiyūr nāṭu"* in the *Cōḷa* country.[8] His battle was considered to be very important probably because it released the *Tamilians* from the fetters of the Northern kings. The victory was felt to be very miraculous because *Ārūrar* assigns the victory to the subjugation of his own mind by the *Pāṇḍya* and it is curious that he refers to this conquest and not to the conquest over the *Jain*. This king is the husband of *Maṅkaiyarkkaraci;* he did all the divine services or *'toṇṭu'* and made the path of the sacred ash flourish. *Cēkkiḻār* tells us that he ruled for a long time.

The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him thus: *"Kaḍumāṟaṉāyaṉār or Dīrghamāṟa, also called Kūṉa* and *Kubja* was the King of *Madura.* He embraced *Jainism* under the influence of *Jinasēna, Bhaṭṭākalaṅka* and others. He was reconverted to *Śaivism* by *Tirujñāṉasambandar"*.[9]

The *Dārāsuram* sculpture[10] represents the king on a raised seat or *siṁhāsana* wearing a crown and a sacred thread. On his right, stands a person with a sacred thread and a tuft knotted to the left probably *Campantar.* Right of him stand two person probably being marched to be impaled.

7. *S.I.I., Vol. III, Part IV, page* 463, *ll.* 14-18.
8. 266/1916.
9. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, *p.* 10.
10. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. IV, fig.* 27.

IV

The 51st saint is *Vāyilār Nāyanār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Turaikkonta cempavaḷam iruḷakarrum cōti ton Mayilai Vāyilān atiyārkkum atiyēn*"—'I am the servant of the servants of *Vāyilān* of the old *Mayilai* of the light of the red coral on the port removing darkness.' *Nampiyāṇṭār* emphasizes his mental worship; his mind was the temple, infinite knowledge was the light, the blossomed heart was the flower and love was the nectar offered—a description which reminds us of some verses of *Appar.* *Cēkkiḻār* identifies this *Mayilai* with *Mylapore* now in *Madras.* He is said to belong to the *Śūdra* community. According to *Cēkkiḻār,* he comes of the family of '*Vāyilārs*'. In addition to what *Nampiyāṇṭār* has said, he informs us that *Vāyilār* bathed the Lord with bliss. In the sculptural representation of this saint at *Dārāsuram,* we find him seated cross-legged between two trees with the beard, the sacred thread, a garland round his neck and probably the *jaṭāmakuṭa* with the *cinmudra* held in the right hand whilst the left hand is resting on his lap. Probably the garland round his neck is *rudrākṣamālā.* The figure suggests a *yōgi* in contemplation on his mental temple.[11]

The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions mention this saint as *Vāyilāru nāyanār* or *Vāgmi* which latter word is only a translation of the name of the saint and he is there also famous for his mental worship.[12]

There is a separate shrine in the Mylapore temple for this saint but it must be of very recent date.

V

The 52nd saint is *Munaiyaṭuvār Nāyanār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are: "*Araikkonta vēl nampi Munaiyaṭuvārkkaṭiyēn*"—'I am the servant of *Munaiyaṭuvār,* the patron and lord of the spear of attack'. According to *Nampiyāṇṭār,* he was the lord of *Nīṭūr.* He was a mercenary soldier, who for money, helped the defeated people to become victorious in war and who gave all his money to the *Śaivites.* This *Nīṭūr, Cēkkiḻār* identifies with a place of that name in the *Cōḻa* country probably nearby the railway station *Nīṭūr* and he also makes the saint a chief of the *Vēḷāṇ* community

11. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pl. IV, fig.* 26.
12. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925, *p.* 10.

explaining further that the money he received as the mercenary soldier for feeding them with ghee, curd, milk, fruits, sugar, and other kinds of food, in addition to the various kinds of gifts to the *Śaivites*. In the *Dārāsuram* sculpture representing this *Nāyanār,* we find three persons: (1) the central one with his tuft dressed up as a *makuṭa* and a sacred thread, is in the act of piercing with a spear which he holds up in his hands. On his left is his opponent who had fallen down on the ground with a crown. On his right stands another with hands held in *añjali* pose, probably the person who had secured the help of this saint against his enemy.[13] The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Monai Āṇḍuvārunāyaṉār* or *Nāsirabhanjana,* the latter expression meaning 'one who destroys the van guard of the enemies' army'. They speak of him as a brave warrior who spent all his earnings in the construction of *Śiva* temple about which we hear nothing in *Tamiḻ*.[14]

13. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pl. III, fig.* 25.
14. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925, *p.* 10.

KAṬAL CŪḺNTA CARUKKAM

I

The ninth verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the phrase '*Kaṭal cūḻnta*' which has become the name of a *carukkam* or *canto* in *Periyapurāṇam* giving us the lives of the saints mentioned in this verse. The first saint in this verse—the 53rd in the list from the beginning—is *Kaḻaṟciṅka Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar's* words are "*Kaṭal cūḻnta ulakelām kākkiṉṟa Perumāṉ Kāṭavarkōṉ Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Kāṭavarkōṉ Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* who is ruling the world surrounded by the seas'. According to *Nampiyāṇṭār,* the nose of the queen who smelt the flower set apart for the Lord of *Ārūr* was cut away when this king however stating that the hand must be first cut away probably because it took the flower before the nose smelt it, cut away accordingly the hand of his very queen. The cutting of the nose was the greatness of another saint *Ceruttuṇai Nāyaṉār* and, therefore, his story also may be taken up for consideration at this point, though he comes as the 55th saint in the list. The words of *Ārūrar,* "*Maṭal cūḻnta tār Nampi Iṭaṅkaḻikkum Tañcai maṉṉavaṉām Ceruttuṇaitaṉ aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of the servants of *Ceruttuṇai,* the king of *Tañjai* and (*Itaṅkaḻi,* the Lord of the garland of petals).' His native place is *Tañcai* in the *Marukal Nāṭu* of the *Cōḻa* country. The full name of the place is given by *Cēkkiḻār* as *Tañcāvūr*. This saint belongs to the *Vēḷāṉ* community according to *Cēkkiḻār*. If we are to reconcile *Ārūrar's* description of the *hymn* as the ruler of *Tañjai* and *Cēkkiḻār's* statement that he belongs to the *Vēḷāṉ* community we must assume that we have a chief of the *Vēḷir* community. *Nampiyāṇṭār* states that he cut away the nose of the queen of *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* when she smelt the flower set apart for the Lord. He does not mention the name of *Cēruttuṇai,* in the verse describing *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ,* but when we take both the verses describing the two saints respectively, it is clear that they give a connected story of *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ's* visit to *Tiruvārūr* with his queen, of *Ceruttuṇai* being there inside the temple at the time, of the queen smelling a flower, of *Ceruttuṇai* getting enraged at this sacrilege cutting away the nose of the

queen, of *Kalarcinkan* intervening and stating that before the nose was cut off, the offending hand must be cut off, and of the King Emperor cutting off the hand of his own queen. *Cēkkilār* gives us some more particulars about *Kalarcinkan*. He came of an old *Pallava* family blessed by the Lord; he went on a military expedition, defeated the frontiers of the enemies and conquered the northern country. He went and visited the temples of *Śiva* and performed true or bodily services. His own crowned queen of great fame going round the temple at *Tiruvārūr* saw all its points of greatness one by one and reached the *maṇṭapa* where the garland for the Lord was woven. On its side was lying a flower which had fallen and she picked it up and was smelling. *Cēkkilār* thus seems to have minimized the fault of the queen. *Cerut-tuṇai* took it as a great sacrilege that she was smelling it within the sacred precincts of the temple and hastened and cut away her nose. There was great bleeding and the queen was rolling on the ground because of great pain. The king who came just then was enraged that somebody had wounded the queen. But when *Ceruttuṇai* explained the circumstances, the king stated that the hand which had first taken the flower should have been cut, and cut away the rosy hand of his beloved crowned queen. The king ruled thereafter for a number of years reaching the abode of *Śiva* in time. From the two accounts,[1] it is quite clear, that both these saints were incapable of governing their impulses; but in fairness to *Śaivism,* we should be careful to reconcile that it was their merit of devotion to God and not their inability to control themselves that enabled them to obtain *Śiva's* Grace. The real greatness lies in their deep reverence for *Śiva,* such a deep reverence that *Ceruttuṇai* forgets that he is cutting away the nose of the queen and *Kalarcinkan* forgets that he is cutting away the hand of his own beloved queen. They forget this world in the thought of the Lord, and old attachments no longer are found to endure. But reading the words of *Ārūrar,* none of these incidents is suggested to our mind.

The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions speak of *Kalarcinka Nāyaṉār* or *Pādasiṁha* as a *Pallava* king of *Kāñci* who cut off the hand of his wife when she took with her hand an old flower garland removed from the body of *Śiva* after worship and smelt

1. *Origin and History of Śaivism, p.* 192, C. V. Narayanaswamy Aiyar.

it — smelling such flowers being considered a heinous sin.[2] This seems to go one step further than *Cēkkiḻār* because after all, the queen here smells an old flower. In those traditions, *Ceruttuṇai Nāyaṉār* is made *Siruttuṇenāyaṉār* but the name is correctly translated as *Raṇamitra* who cut off the nose of the queen of *Pādasiṁha* for smelling the old flower garland removed from *Śiva's* image and thrown out.

The *Dārāsuram sculpture*[3] represents a *Śaivite* sitting down and probably preparing garlands out of flowers lying on the raised platform before him. On the other side of this platform stands the queen clothed from the waist to the ankle. Her left hand rests on the platform and her right hand holds a flower which she is smelling. Next to her stands a person with the sacred thread probably in the act of worshipping. On the left hand side of the sculpture we find *Ceruttuṇai* cutting away the nose of the queen with a sword or a knife. The inscription beneath the sculpture is *Seruttuṇaiyāṇḍār*. In the sculpture representing the story of *Kaḻaṟciṅka Nāyaṉār*,[4] we find *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* with his crown and his flowing clothes catching hold of the left hand of the queen with his left hand and raising his sword with his right hand to cut away her hand. The question of identification of this king was discussed in our attempt at fixing the age of *Ārūrar*.[5]

II

The 54th saint is *Iṭaṅkaḻi Nāyaṉār*. *Ārūrar's* words have already been referred to above. He refers to him as a *Nampi*. It shows he must be of some importance in the *Śaivite* world. *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him the king of *Irukkuvēḷūr* who proclaimed that all his wealth belonged to *Śaivites*. The *Dārāsuram* sculpture represents this story with the inscriptions *Iṭaṅkaḻiyāṇṭār* underneath it. We find *Iṭaṅkaḻi* sitting cross legged with a sacred thread on a raised seat, with ornaments and the tuft of hair knotted to the left in a peculiar *makuṭa* form, giving orders for issuing a proclamation. On his right probably representing another scene is one who is playing on the drum notifying the proclamation probably to the effect that the king's wealth belongs

2. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, *p.* 10.
3. *Pl. III, fig.* 22.
4. *Pl.* III, *fig.* 24.
5. *Vol. I.*, Age of *Ārūrar*

to the *Śaivites*. It is here that *Nampiyāṇṭār* refers to his contemporary king *Āditya* and we get the new information that this *Āditya* adorned the roof of the *Tillai* temple with gold brought from the *Koṅku* country. *Cēkkiḻār* mentions the same story and both of them make *Iṭaṅkaḻi* the ancestor of the *Cōḻa Āditya*, the founder of that line of *Cōḻa* kings, which gave to the world *Rājarāja* and *Rājēndra* the great. But *Cēkkiḻār* does not make *Irukkuvēḷūr*, the capital of *Irukkuvēḷir*, the native city of *Iṭaṅkaḻi*, as is done by *Nampiyāṇṭār*. According to *Cēkkiḻār*, *Koṭumpāḷūr* in *Kōṉāṭu* which is a division of *Pudukkōṭṭa*, was the capital city of this *Vēḷir* chief. The *Irukkuvels* are said to have ruled from *Koṭumpāḷūr* and, therefore, the *Irukkuvēḷūr* mentioned by *Nampiyāṇṭār* may be taken as referring to the capital city of the *Irukkuvēḷs* which was probably no other than *Koṭumpāḷūr*. *Cēkkiḻār* gives some more particulars about this saint. There was a *Śaivite* who undertook as his life mission to feed every day the followers of *Śaivism*. He could not get any employment for earning the money required for this kind of service. Knowing no other way of livelihood, he entered the royal store of paddy but he was caught red-handed as a thief. He was brought before the king. The *Śaivite* explained the truth. The *Śaivite* king explained, "Is not this saint my true treasure house?" and allowed him to take away all that he could from the store of paddy and from his treasury.

Iṭaṅkaḻi may mean the tiger which dismisses without touching anything that falls to its left and we know many chieftains metaphorically mentioned as '*puli*' — see, *Kōṭpuli, Ciṟappuli*.

Iṭaṅkaḻi is used by *Tiruttakka Tēvar* as one beyond the reach of others: "*Iṭaṅkaḻi kāmam*" (2038). We know of one *Koṭumpāḷur* chief '*Paradurggamardhana*' called '*Vātāpi jit*', which suggests that *Koṭumpāḷur Vēḷirs* probably accompanied the *Pallavas* on the northern expeditions against the *Chāḷukyas* of *Vātāpi*.[6] Since tradition makes *Ceruttuṇai* and *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ*, contemporaries, there is nothing wrong in our considering *Iṭaṅkaḻi* who comes in between the two saints in the list of *Toṇṭar*, as being also a contemporary of these two saints. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions pronounce this name as *Idamkrishi*. According to them, he was a *Cōḻa* king who not only excused the thief who stole grains from

6. *Koṭumpāḷur Inscription; Journal of Oriental Research, Vol. VII; J.R.A.S.*, 1935.

his palace granary to feed *Śaivites,* but also threw his granary and treasury open to all *Śaivites* and thus rendered robbery unnecessary.[7]

III

The 55th saint is *Cerruttuṇai.* With regard to this saint we have already discussed along with *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* and hence it is unnecessary to repeat anything about this saint here.

IV

The 56th saint is *Pukaḻttuṇai Nāyaṉār,* and *Ārūrar's* words are, "*Puṭai cūḻnta puliyataḷmēl aravāṭa āṭip poṉṉaṭikkē maṉam vaitta Pukaḻttuṇaikkum aṭiyeṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Pukaḻttuṇai* who concentrated his mind on the golden feet of the Lord of dance who dances whilst the serpents on the tiger's skin round him, dance.' *Ñāṉacampantar* himself speaks of this saint as the servant of the Lord, who was in a sorry plight and who received a coin every day and worshipped at *Puttūr* in the morning and evening.[8] One may be tempted to make him a contemporary of *Ñāṉacampantar* because of the verb in the phrase *'Pōṟṟum Puttūrē'*. In his *Aricirkaraipputtūr hymn, Ārūrar* gives the story of this saint in the 6th verse: "The *Brahmin* who belonged to the inner circle of service (*akattaṭimai*) brought water from the *Aricil* river and was bathing the Lord. He was so famished and weak that he let fall the water pot on your crown. He shook with fear. You arranged a daily batta of one gold coin and made it enter the grateful hands of *Pukaḻttuṇai.* You were happy for having done this. O, thou pure God of *Tirupputtūr* full of gardens" — this is the substance of the verse.[9] *Nampiyāṇṭār* makes him a native of *Ceruviliputtūr.* There was a great famine and this saint had no food. Therefore, he had to let fall the water pot on the Lord who, therefore, blessed him with wealth. *Cēkkiḻār* tells us that a sleep overcame him when on account of fatigue he let fall the water pot. In the dream, the Lord appeared to inform that a coin everyday would be placed till the famine was over. Waking up from sleep he found a coin below the seat of the Lord.

7. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925, *p.* 10.
8. 2:63:7.
9. 7:6:6.

The *Dārāsuram* sculpture represents this story on its northern wall.[10] This story has to be read from the left to the right. We find a *vimāṉa,* and a *liṅga* beneath it in the *Garbhagṛha,* on which *liṅga, Pukaḻttuṇai* is letting fall his water vessel whilst he himself collapses and sits down overcome by fatigue. Probably he had dreamt of the promise of the gold coin and we see him walking away having left the *garbhagṛha* and the *maṇṭapa* in front of it. We see him walking between his *maṇṭapa* and the sacred bull, holding up his slightly extended hands in wonder and awe. There is a *'balipīṭha'* behind the sacred bull, and we see *Pukaḻttuṇai* in the act of taking away a coin from there. There is another temple probably of the Mother Goddess also represented behind him though it does not explain the story any further. *Pukaḻttuṇai Nāyaṉār's* name is translated into *Kīrtinātha* in the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions which though giving the story of the saint letting fall the vessel, does not mention the gift of the coin by the Lord.

V

The 57th saint is *Kōṭpuli Nāyaṉār.* The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Aṭal cūḻnta vēl Nampi Kōṭpulikkum aṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Kōṭpuli,* the Lord of the spear conspiring to kill the enemies or the spear crowded with victories'. He was one of the contemporary chieftains of *Ārūrar* who praises him in another verse as the Lord of *Nāṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi* of old fame in the *Cōḻa* country, the obstinate *Kōṭpuli* who conquered the enemy kings when they came in a crowd.[11] *Kūṭṭam* or crowd is the accepted reading but in one edition the reading is *kūṭam.* It is not clear whether this is the name of a battlefield or whether it means secret strategy. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* makes him the chief of *Nāṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi* and states that he received the blessings of *Ārūrar,* that he became glorious by killing away his relatives who broke his oath uttered in the name of the Lord. According to *Cēkkiḻār,* he was a member of the *Vēḷāṉ* community and a commander-in-chief of the *Cōḻa* army. He made his plant of fame flourish through war, which, however, made the plant of misery flourish in the lands of others. All the wealth received from his king he utilized in storing up paddy like the mountain of gold for feeding the *Śaivites.* Before starting on one of the expeditions against the enemies as ordered by his king, he sealed his store of paddy and told the relatives

10. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pl. III, fig.* 21.
11. 7:15:10.

that in the name of the order of the Lord which does not hasten, the paddy should not even be thought of by them. In a few days, a famine devastated the country and the relatives preferred the breach of that order to their death and ate the paddy. *Kōṭpuli,* hearing of this on his return, conspired to bring them all inside his house under the pretext of making a gift of the great wealth he had amassed in war and keeping his grandson or his grandfather (*Pērōṉ*) killed them all for eating away his paddy. There was a child which escaped this slaughter and the grandfather or grandson pleaded for it, stating that it had not tasted the paddy and therefore it should be left to continue their line. *Kōṭpuli,* however, threw it and cut it away with the sword, because it had tasted the milk of the woman who had tasted the forbidden paddy. Then and there, *Śiva* appeared to take the saint away to his own abode.

Cēkkiḻār does not mention anything about *Ārūrar* meeting this saint in this *Purāṇa* describing the saint's life, though he refers to the reception given by *Kōṭpuli* to *Ārūrar* and the gift of his own daughters to the latter in the *Ēyarkōṉ Kalikkāma Nāyaṉār Purāṇam.* This makes one suspect that *Cēkkiḻār* is thinking of some other *Kōṭpuli Nāyaṉār* probably an ancestor of this *Kōṭpuli* met by *Ārūrar.* If there was not even a child left, how can there be any one left to meet *Ārūrar*? But the grandson rather than the grandfather must be taken to be the meaning of the word '*Pērōṉ*' or '*Peyarōṉ*' and he must have escaped the universal slaughter because he went with his grandfather and thus avoided the necessity of eating the paddy. This seems to be the suggestion of *Cēkkiḻār* though *Nampiyāṇṭār* will make this saint *Kōṭpuli* the very *Kōṭpuli* who met *Ārūrar.* Then the question will arise how could *Ārūrar* who had sung *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* wherein he included the name of this saint sing of his escaping the fetters of relationship and reaching the abode of the Lord, thanks to the great attachment to the name of God, and meet the very same *Kōṭpuli* sometime after he had sung the *hymn.* This question has to be studied in some detail when we come to fix the time when *Tiruṭṭoṇṭattokai* was sung. This story is given in one of the *Dārāsuram* sculptures with the inscription *Kōṭpuliyāṇḍār* underneath it. In the right half we find *Kōṭpuli* holding the sword after having thrown up the child which is falling on the sword; there are also three persons probably those attacked by his sword, being in three progressive grades of falling down. The

left hand half shows *Śiva, Pārvatī* and the bull in front of whom stands *Kōṭpuli* holding his hands in an *añjali* pose. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Kōṭpuli Nāyaṉār,* translate the name as *Vīraśārdūla* and give the story as found in *Cēkkiḻār.*[12] We have shown already in another place that this victorious battle which *Kōṭpuli* fought against a crowd of enemies is taken by Dr. Mīnākṣi and others as referring to the battles which *Teḷḷāṟeṟinta Nampi* fought against these southern kings. But if *Kōṭpuli* belong to the age of *Rājasiṁha* as we hold, the battle should be one of the many battles which *Paramēśvara* as the king and *Rājasiṁha* as prince fought against *Vikramāditya I,* who with the help of *Gaṅgas* and probably some southern kings and chieftains tried to avenge the sack of *Bādāmi* by the *Pallavas* during the reign of his father *Puḷakēsin II. Periyapurāṇam* speaks of a series of northern expeditions, both offensive and defensive, in which a number of *Śaivite* saints had taken part—*Kalippakai, Aiyaṭikaḷ, Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ, Kōṭpuli, Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟaṉ* and *Ciṟuttoṇṭar.* Probably all these are referring to the *Chāḷukyan* invasion and the *Tamilian* counter invasion.

12. *Mys. Arch. Rep.,* 1925

CHAPTER X

PATTARĀYP PAṆIVĀR CARUKKAM

The tenth verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the phrase *"Pattarāyppaṇivār"* which has become the name of a *carukkam* or *canto* in *Periyapurāṇam* describing groups of saints — the 58th to the 64th in the list from the beginning—mentioned in this verse. After the generalization into groups in this 10th verse, the 11th verse begins to continue the list of individual saints. This may suggest that this 10th verse was an interpolation into the *hymn* of 10 verses sung in accordance with his usual scheme of singing every *hymn* with ten verses. But as already pointed out this verse summarizes, as it were, the message of the whole *hymn* and is too significant to be an interpolation. Even if it is, it must be by one who had understood the message of this *hymn*. Therefore, it ought to be studied after our study of all the individual saints.

CHAPTER XI

MANNIYA CĪRC CARUKKAM

I

The eleventh verse in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* begins with the phrase, *"Maṉṉiya cīr"* which is the name of the *Carukkam* or *canto* in *Periyapurāṇam* describing all the personalities mentioned in this verse. The first saint in this verse and the 65th in the list from the beginning is *Pūcalār Nāyaṉār*. He belonged to *Tiruniṉṟavūr* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies with the city of that name in the *Toṇṭai-nāṭu* a place sung by *Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār*[1] — none other than the place *Tiṉṉaṉūr* in the Madras-Arakkōṇam line. The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Maṉṉiya cīr maṟaināvaṉ Niṉṟavūrp Pūcal* (*vari vaḷaiyāḷ Māṉikkum Nēcaṉukkum*) *aṭiyēṉ"*—'I am the servant of (*Nēcaṉ* and *Māṉi* of the beautiful bangles and of) *Pūcal* of *Niṉṟa-vūr* of well established greatness, the great reciter of the *Vēdas*. *Cēkkiḻār,* therefore, calls him a *Brahmin*. Probably it is this saint who is praised by *Ārūrar* in one of the two *Niṉṟiyūr hymns* which we had suggested to be a *Niṉṟavūr hymn*.[2] The name *Pūcal* has come from the root *'Pūcu'* to besmear with sacred ash.—*"Nīṟu Pūcattiṉār"*[2a] are the words of *Ārūrar*. The story of the saint has become well known to the historians of the *Pallava* age. He began building a mental temple and fixed a date for its consecration. The contemporary *Pallava* king also fixed the same date for the stone temple he had constructed at *Kāñci*. *Śiva* preferred *Pūcalār's* temple of the mind and requested the *Pallava* to fix another date for his temple, the temple of stone. Mr. Gopalan thinks that there is a reference to this in the inscription of *Rāja-siṁha* where the latter is said to have heard the voice of heavens. *Nampiyāṇṭār* states that *Pūcalār* was desirous of constructing a temple and spent sleepless nights in laying out the details of that temple. *Cēkkiḻār* gives a more detailed story. The saint came to the conclusion that he must construct a temple but he failed to get any money. He, however, gathered the wealth and the

1. 2:5:2; 7:5:10.
2. Vol. III.
2a. 7:19:2.

architects in his own imagination and began the construction in his own mind. The day for consecration was also fixed. The *Pallava* was told to fix another date in his dream by *Śiva*. The *Pallava* king was so surprized that he went to *Tiruniṉṟavūr* to have a sight of the temple preferred by God. No temple could be seen but he met *Pūcalāṟ* from whom he learnt that it was all a temple of the mind. It is probably this that *Ārūrar* refers to: "*Vāyār maṉattāl niṉaikkum avarukku aruntavattil tūyār*",[2b] and '*Pukaḻttoṇṭar*'[2c] will become one of the names of *Pūcalār*. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of this saint as *Bhōsala*, a *Brahmin* who pleased *Śiva* by his mental worship in a mental temple of his own.[3] The temple in *Tiṉṉaṉūr* is of '*Hṛdālayēśvarar*' or '*Maṉakkōyil koṇṭār*', probably built after this great incident. An inscription of *Dantivarmaṉ* and *Pūcalār's* image are found there. The lions of *Rājasiṁha's* pillars are also found and one of the statues found there is pointed out as that of a *Rājasiṁha* himself. Therefore, following Mr. Gopalan's conclusion, we may take that *Pūcalār* was a contemporary of *Rājasiṁha* and that *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* as described by *Cēkkiḻār* was a contemporary of *Pūcalār*.

II

The 66th saint is *Maṅkaiyarkkaraciyār*. *Ārūrar* speaks of her as '*Māṉi*', '*Varivaḷaiyāḷ*', following *Campantar* who speaks of her as '*Varivaḷaikkaimmaṭa Māṉi*'.[3a] *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* mentions her as '*Pāṇṭimātēviyām Māṉi*'. She was the wife of *Kuṉ Pāṇṭiya* and brought *Campantar* to *Maturai* to put down the *Jaina* influence. *Māṉi* or *Maṅkaiyarkkaraciyār* is mentioned by *Campantar*.[4] She was according to him the daughter of a *Cōḻa*, *Maṉimuṭiccōḻaṉ*[5] ruling the world who patronized the path of the sacred ash; she was a beautiful person adorned with the sacred ash and full of *bhakti*.[6] The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions make her the daughter of *Pogaḻchōḻa* (*Pukaḻccōḻa*) and she is also called *Kulaśchari*.[7] The *Dārāsuram* sculptures represent her in *Pl. II, fig.* 13.[8] *Campantar*

2b. 7:19:10.
2c. 7:19:11.
3. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, p. 10.
3a. 3:120:1.
4. 3:120.
5. 3:120:9.
6. 3:120:7.
7. *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1925, p. 10.
8. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20.

is there found seated. *Pāṇṭimātēvi* with her companion is found holding her hands in the *añjali* pose worshipping or welcoming *Campantar*. Behind *Campantar* stands a person probably *Kulaccirai*. At a distance stand two persons holding their hands in the *añjali* pose probably the followers of *Campantar* or the servants of the *Pāṇḍya* house-hold. The inscription underneath the sculpture speaks of her as *Pāṇṭimātēvi*.

III

The 67th saint is *Nēca Nāyaṉār*. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* makes him a native of *Kampili* and a weaver or '*cāliyaṉ*'. He wove clothes and loin cloths and presented them free to the *Śaivites*. No further details are given by *Cēkkiḻār*. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of him as *Kēra Nāyaṉār* or *Snēhanātha*. One of the *Dārāsuram* sculptures[9] represent the story with the inscription *Nēsāṇḍār* beneath it. *Nēcāṇṭār* is there with his cloth coming from the waist to a point very much above the knee and with his tuft knotted to the left and a necklace probably of *Rudrākṣa*. He is holding up a loin cloth in his right hand which is in the act of being presented to a *Śaivite bhakta* who is found here with the sacred thread. *Kampili* is on the banks of *Tuṅgabhadra*. If our contention that *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* is a list of *Tamiḻ* saints is correct, that *hymn* must have been sung in an age when the power of any one of the *Tamiḻ* kings extended up to *Tuṅgabhadra* and this could not have been after the time of *Nandivarma Pallava*. Some, however, point out that *Nēca Nāyaṉār* and *Tirumūlar* said to have come from *Kailās* are saints of the northern country. *Tirumūlar* got into the body of a *Tamilian* shepherd according to the story. He must be considered to be an out and out *Tamilian;* for, this description of a *Tamilian* can never refer to the soul but only to the body. Instead of making *Nēca Nāyaṉār* an exception to the rule, it is much better to look upon him as the saint of the *Tamiḻ* country living in the age of the great *Pallavas*.

IV

The 68th saint is *Kōcceṅkaṭ-cōḻa Nāyaṉār*. The words of *Ārūrar* are, "*Teṉṉavaṉāy ulakāṇṭa Ceṅkaṇārkkaṭiyēṉ*" — 'I am the servant of *Ceṅkaṇār* who ruled the world as the Emperor of the South.' *Teṉṉavaṉ* usually means the *Pāṇḍya*, but *Ārūrar* here uses it in the sense of the Southern ruler. It is from this point

9. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. II, fig.* 12.

of view that *Cēkkiḻār* speaks of all the rulers who invaded South India or *Tamiḻ* Lands as the Northern kings or *'Vaṭapulattaracar'*. It is curious to note that *Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār* also refers to him as *'Ulakamāṇṭa Teṉṉāṭaṉ'* (*Tirunaraiyūrp patikam* 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 9) reminding us of *Ārūrar's* phrase *'Teṉṉavaṉāy Ulakāṇṭa'*.[10] He is also spoken of as the victor, the king of the northern country and the western *Koṅku*. It is *Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār* who gives us the information that he has built 70 temples to *Śiva*[11] and *Nampiyārūrar* refers to this *Cōḻa* king as one who built *Naṉṉilam temple*.[12] *Campantar* speaks of *Ampar temple*,[13] *Vaikal Māṭakkōyil*[14] and *Taṇṭalai nīḷ neṟi*[15] as having been built by this great *Cōḻa*.

Even by the time of these saints, his story has become a mythological one and a tradition in the *Tamiḻ* country. *Ārūrar* speaks of the previous birth of this king. God was pleased with a spider and made it *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*.[16] *Appar* and *Campantar* give a detailed version of this story. A spider put up a cobweb of a *'pantal'* with its saliva, covering it with dry leaves to form a canopy over the *liṅga* at *Tiruvāṉaikkā*. God was so pleased with the kind act of even this insect that he made it be born in the *Cōḻa* country of the *Kāviri* fame as *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*.[17] *Appar* states that as soon as this spider died, it was made king *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*.[18] The cause of its death is explained in the following way. There was an elephant which was also worshipping at *Tiruvāṉaikkā* according to the accepted practice, the elephant being the *'Airāvatha'* of *Indra*. The elephant looked upon the cobweb as so much rubbish and removed it. Thereupon the spider became enraged and got into the trunk of the elephant to give it trouble. The elephant dashed its trunk on the ground and the poor spider died. Lord *Śiva* appeared and blessed the spider to be born as the *Cōḻa* whilst the white elephant was allowed to return to Heavens. This story is given in detail by *Cēkkiḻār*. After having ruled the world as *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*, God allowed him to enter the group of *Śivagaṇas* in his next birth—

10. 7:39:11.
11. *Periya Tirumoḻi*, 6:6:8.
12. *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ cey kōyil*, 7:98:11.
13. 3:19:1; 2; 5 & 9.
14. 3:18:2; 4 & 6.
15. 3:50:9.
16. *Ap.*, 65:1 and *Camp.*, 2:63:7.
17. *Ap.* 49:4; 233:5; 236:3; 278:6; 287:8; 288:8.
18. 4:49:4.

that is what *Appar* tells us.[19] *Campantar* also refers to the spider becoming the *Cōḻa*.[20] He begins to explain the name as "*Ceyya Kaṉ Iṟai*";[21] "*Ceyya Kaṉ Vaḷavaṉ*";[22] "*Ceṅkaṭpeyar Koṇṭavaṉ*"[23] though he mentions also the name *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*.[24] *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* speaks of this *Cōḻa* as one who never thought of any faith other than *Śaivism*. He refers to the spider becoming the king and building temples. He writes two verses:[25] In the first of it he gives the story of *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* and in the second he speaks of *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* as the ancestor of the king who passed away during the life of *Nampiyāṇṭār*, the king whom we identified with *Āditya I*.

Cēkkiḻār's story is much more graphic and detailed. We had already referred to the spider and the elephant. The father of Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ according to *Periyapurāṇam* was *Śubhadēva* and his mother *Kamalāvati*. The parents worshipped at *Tillai*. The mother kept herself hanging upside down which reminds us of the birth of *Karikāla*[26] so that the child might be born in an auspicious hour to rule the whole world. After giving birth at the proper time, she expired. As soon as *Ceṅkaṇāṉ* grew up to manhood, the father abdicated the throne in his favour and returned to the forest as an ascetic. *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* built many temples, endowed them richly for their daily worship and for the *Brahmins* at *Tillai*. This mythological story is mentioned in the *Tiruvālaṅkāṭu* plates of *Rājēndra*. The *Kannada* and *Sanskrit* traditions translate his name as *Raktākṣa Cōḻa* and give us the story as found in *Periyapurāṇam*. One of the *Dārāsuram* sculptures gives us the representation of the story with the inscription *Kō-Seṅgapperumāḷ* underneath it.[27] In this sculpture there is a temple with the *vimāna* in which stands the king with the crown and flowing clothes with flying ends. He holds the hands in the *añjali* pose. The colophon to the *Puranāṉūṟu* (Verse 74) says that the verse was sung by *Cēramāṉ Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṟai* who was defeated by *Cōḻaṉ Ceṅkaṇāṉ* and that he sang it before his death. But *Tamiḻ Nāvalar*

19. 296:6.
20. 2:63:7.
21. 3:19:2.
22. 3:18:2.
23. 2:23:5.
24. 1:48:6; 3:18:4; 3:50:9.
25. *Tirut. Tiruvantāti*, 81, 82.
26. *Tāy vayiṟṟiruntu tāyam eyti—Porunarāṟṟuppaṭai*.
27. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. I, fig.* 11.

caritai states that this verse was said to *Poykaiyār* by the *Cēramāṉ* and *Poykaiyār* sang the glories of the *Cōḻa* fight in *Kaḷavaḻi Nāṟpatu* to please the *Cōḻa* and obtain the release of his king and patron *Cēramāṉ*. The colophon to the *Caṅkam* poems is preferred to the statements in the *Tamiḻ Nāvalar caritai* but in the absence of any specific reference in this verse itself the *colophon* is not conclusive. It is clear from what we have been writing that *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ's* name has become one of mythological importance, under whose name all sorts of stories grew sometimes as the stories of his previous birth, sometimes as the stories of his future birth. His name has come to be remembered as the greatest temple builder. He has built *Śiva* temples and also *Viṣṇu* temples. That is the tradition and it is very difficult to say whether he had built all the seventy *Śiva* temples himself. The names of his parents must have been invented in later times when high sounding *Sanskrit* terms captured the minds of people, long after the age of *Ārūrar*. It is not also clear whether the *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* of the *Caṅkam* age is this very *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*, the saint and the temple builder. In any case, if *Appar* could be taken as having been born in the closing years of the sixth century at least one or two generations are necessary to have elapsed before him so as to enable the people of his times to believe in the story of the spider becoming the king.

Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār refers to *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* in his two *hymns* on *Tirunaṟaiyūr*. He speaks of the temple there as a *'māṭakkōyil'* in his *Periya Tirumaṭal*. In the first of the *hymns*, he refers to the *Cōḻa* as *Ceṅkōl Valavaṉ*,[28] the correct reading should be *Ceṅkōl Vaḷavaṉ*. In the third *hymn* (6:6), in every verse he refers to this *Cōḻa*. The first verse speaks of him as *Cempiyaṉ Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*. The second verse speaks of his greatness as the greatness of the *Kāviri*. The third verse refers to the battle of *Veṇṇi* in which he became victorious. He is there referred to have used a divine sword and the *Vaiṣnavite* commentators explain this reference as referring to a sword given by the Lord of *Tirunaṟaiyūr*. The 4th verse also refers to this battle-field. The 5th verse speaks of him as the Lord of the *Cōḻa* country, the northern country and the southern *Tamil* country, whereas in the 3rd verse and the 4th verse the *Āḻvār* was speaking of victorious kings

28. 6:4:3.

defeated and killed. The 6th verse speaks of the chieftain *Viḷantaivēḷ* of the *Vēḷir* community who was conquered and killed by *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ*, the Lord of the southern country and of the west *Koṅku*. The verse refers to him as *Kulaccōḻaṉ* and describes the greatness of *Kāviri*. The 8th verse refers to this *Cōḻa* building 70 *māṭakkōyil* to *Śiva* and his ruling the world. The old *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators state that this *Cōḻa* failed to get his desires fulfilled by the construction of those 70 *Śiva* temples and, therefore, took refuge in the feet of *Mahāviṣṇu* at *Tirunaṟaiyūr*. The 9th verse speaks of the battle of *Aḻuntai* where the *Cōḻa* cut away the bodies of kings. The battle of *Kaḻumalam* referred to in *Kaḷavaḻi Nāṟpatu* (36) *"Kaviri Nāṭaṉ Kaḻumalam koṇṭa nāḷ"* is not at all mentioned by this *Āḻvār*. Nor, is there, a reference to the *Cēra* mentioned in *Kaḷavaḻi*—*"Vañcikkō aṭṭa kaḷattu"* (39). One may doubt therefore whether this *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* is identical with the *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* of *Kaḷavaḻi*. The *Veṇṇi* battle reminds us of *Karikāla* who defeated the *Cēra* king *Cēralātaṉ*.[29] But this must be a different battle. The *Cōḻa* seems to have been subduing the *Vēḷir* chieftains who were proclaiming themselves as this king and that king is mentioned in *"Pārāḷar aṟivar eṉṟu . . . . "* (6 : 6).

V

The 69th saint is *Tirunīlakaṇṭa Yāḻppāṇar*. The words of *Ārūrar*, are *"Tirunīlakaṇṭatup pāṇaṉārkkaṭiyēṉ"* — 'I am the servant of *Tirunīlakaṇṭattuppāṇaṉār*'. The usage of this form *'Tirunīlakaṇṭattu'* has already been noted when we were discussing *Tirunīlakaṇṭattuk kuyavaṉār*. This *Pāṇar* according to *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* is a native of *Erukkattampuliyūr* which *Cēkkiḻār* identifies with the village of that name in the *Cōḻa* country. His greatness according to *Nampiyāṇṭār* was that he accompanied *Campantar* and played the latter's *hymns* on his *'yāḻ'*, that he was a *Perumpāṇaṉ*, that is one who uses the *'Pēriyāḻ'* and not the *'Ciriyāḻ'* of seven strings. *Cēkkiḻār* gives further details. The saint went to worship at *Maturai*. As ordered in their dreams, the *Śaivite bhaktas* took the *Pāṇa* to the presence of the Lord at *Tiruvālavāy* who pleased with the *Pāṇa's* song expressed in a voice heard in the empty space that the *'yāḻ'* would get out of tune if placed on the cold floor and that, therefore, a beautiful plank should be given for placing the *'yāḻ'* on it. A gold plank was

29. *Akam.*, 55.

given accordingly. The *Pāṇa* went to play on the *yāḻ* in all the temples till he met *Campantar* at *Cīkāḻi*. *Pāṇar* accompanied *Campantar* wherever the latter went and finally disappeared with him at the time of the marriage of *Campantar* to attain salvation. The story of the old plank is not even whispered by *Nampiyāṇṭār* and in the story found in *Tiruviḷaiyāṭal*, the name of the *Pāṇa* is *Pāṇapattiraṉ*, who in the time of *Varaguṇa* went to *Cēramāṉ* with a letter of introduction from Lord *Śiva*. Therefore, the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions speak of *Yāḻppāṇa Nāyaṉār* or *Tirunīla-kaṇṭha*, a musician, famous for his devotional songs in praise of *Śiva* receiving valuable rewards from *Cēramāṉ*. But *Cēkkiḻār* does not so identify *Pāṇapattira* whose story he narrates in *Kaḻaṟiṟṟari-vār Purāṇam* with *Nīlakaṇṭa Yāḻppāṇar*. If both the *Pāṇas* are identical, this saint must be a younger contemporary of *Campantar* and the elder contemporary of *Cēramāṉ* probably also of *Ārūrar*. *Campantar* himself speaks of a *Pāṇa* singing the praises with great *bhakti* in accompaniment to music and receiving the blessings of the Lord:[30] *"Pāṇaṉicai pattimaiyāl pāṭutalum parintaḷittāṉ"*; *"Takkapūmaṉaic cuṟṟak karuḷoṭē tāramuyttatu Pāṇarkaruḷoṭē"*[31] is another reference. One of the *Dārāsuram* sculptures represents this story. We find the *Pāṇa* with his wife playing on the '*yāḻ*' in front of the temple which is half visible. We notice herein the old form of this *yāḻ*.[32]

VI

The 70th and the 71st saints are *Caṭaiyaṉār* and *Icaiñāṉiyār*. They are not counted that way by *Ārūrar*. In the portion of the last verse where he usually mentions his names as the author of the *hymn*, he describes himself as the son of *Caṭaiyaṉ* and *Icaiñāṉi*. The words of *Ārūrar* are, *"Eṉṉavaṉām araṉaṭiyē aṭain-tiṭṭa Caṭaiyaṉ Icaiñāṉi kātalaṉ Tirunāvalūrkkōṉ aṉṉavaṉām Ārūraṉ aṭimai kēṭṭuvappār Ārūril ammāṉuk kaṉpar āvārē"*:[33] 'They will become the lovers of the Lord of *Ārūraṉ*, those who are happy to listen to the servility of that *Ārūraṉ*, the chief of *Tiru-nāvalūr*, the beloved son of *Icaiñāṉi* and *Caṭaiyaṉ* who reached the feet of my *Hara*'. Thus, *Ārūrar* has not included them in the list of saints. The later generation cannot help including in the

30. 1:62:9.
31. 3:115:6.
32. *M.A.R.*, 1919-20, *Pl. I*, *fig* 10.
33. 39:11.

list these two great personalities who brought forth *Ārūrar* into this world. *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* and *Cēkkiḻār* emphasize this greatness. An inscription of *Kulōttuṅka II* issued in the 7th year of his reign ends with the following words: *"Āḷuṭaiya Nampikaḷ mātākkaḷ Icaiñāṉiyār"—"Jñānī bhavatō Jñāṉaśivācārya kulē bhavat, Śaivē Gautama gōtrēsmin jñāṉyakhya Kamalāpurē"*.[34] This makes *Ārūrar*, a member of the *Gautama gōtra;* the name *Nampiyārūrar* was also the name of his grand-father of *Tiruvārūr*. It is rather curious that *Cēkkiḻār* does not give the particulars about his *gōtra*. The *Dārāsuram* sculptures give us their pictures.[35] Plate 8 represents *Icaiñāṉiyār* and plate 9 represents *Caṭaiyaṉār*. *Caṭaiyaṉār* has a beard and mustache and a sacred thread. The cloth is found flowing, thus emphasizing his importance. The mother has no upper cloth. She wears ear-rings, necklace, and bangles. If what the *Mysore Archaeological Report* (1925) states is correct, the *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions make *Jaḍenāyaṉār* or *Nīlajñāni Kapardi,* the father of *Tiruñāṉacampantar,* whilst *Yasyajñāni* is made the mother of *Campantar*. But it is also mentioned there that *Jaṭēśvara* was the father of *Ārūrar* and *Sujñānini,* the mother of *Ārūrar*.

34. *S.I.I., Vol. VII, No.* 485, *p.* 298.
35. *M.A.R.,* 1919-20, *Pls.* 8 & 9.

PART II

CHAPTER I

THE *TOṆṬAR* (DEVOTEES) AND THEIR RELIGION

I

WORSHIP: CLASSIFICATION:

All those various kinds of worship, mentioned in *Part I,* of the saints may be brought under certain well-known heads. Though the details given by the modern tradition and the tradition that may be taken to have been known to *Nampiyāṇṭār* may differ, the underlying principles are all the same in both cases. We have more of miracles and more of aggressive and punitive acts, elaborated in the later day tradition. But that does not affect the fundamental basis of the worship of these saints. We have the importance of temple worship brought out through the lives of many saints.

Building temples, digging tanks attached to these temples, Temple worship, *Liṅga* worship, offering rice *etc.* as *naivēdya,* lighting lamps, burning incense, offering sandal paste, offering various requirements of musical instruments, *abhiṣēka* to the *Liṅga* inside or outside the temples, attending and performing the festivals to the temples — all these come under the general head of temple worship.

The *Āgamas* dealing with temple worship were probably in existence at the time of *Ārūrar,* and people were in search of these *Āgamas* in general. But, though we know of *Brahmin* priests like *Pukaḻttuṇai, Murukaṉ* and *Śivakōcariyār,* members of other castes were also known to have acted as priests at the temples, as is learnt from the following verse of *Campantar*:

> *"Patta rōṭu palarum poliyam malar aṅkaip puṉal tūvi*
> *Otta colli ulakattavar tāmtoḻu tētta uyar ceṉṉi*
> *Mattam vaitta perumāṉ piriyā tuṟaikiṉṟa valitāyam*
> *Cittam vaittā aṭiyār avarmēl aṭaiyāmaṟ ṟiṭarnōyē".*[1]

1. 1:3:1.

'Many, along with the *bhaktas,* shower the shining flowers and water from the palms of their hand. The people of the world praise and worship, uttering what is appropriate. The Lord resides there, at *Valitāyam,* He, who has placed the *'matta'* flower on His towering crown. Obstacles and diseases inflict not the devotees who place within their heart this *Valitāyam'*.

The belief, in the sacred ash (*Vibhūti*), in *rudrākṣa,* in the *mantra pañcākṣara,* in the *Śrī Rudram* of the *Vēda* — forms part of *Āgamic* worship. The reverence for the name *Tirunīlakaṇṭha* implies the popularity of the *Purāṇic* stories and a recitation of *Purāṇas* has become part of temple worship. Singing of *hymns* and playing them on musical instruments are also connected with temple worship. Pilgrimages to holy places sanctified by temples became a common habit of pious people. Certain places became *'tīrthas'* (holy places) and people born there were looked upon as *Śivagaṇas* as was seen in the story of *Naminanti aṭikaḷ,* one of the 63 *Śaiva* saints.

The rules of the rituals were not always strictly followed. What was considered important was the love of God as is seen by the story of *Kaṇṇappar* and that of *Cākkiya Nāyaṉār.* The performance of *pūjā* or worship will come under the head *Kriyā mārga,* whilst the other services will come under the head *Caryā mārga.*

We have also cases of private or individual worship of *'liṅga'* as in the case of *Saṇḍēśvara* as contrasted with the public worship within the temple. There are also cases of mental worship: the life of *Pūcalār* and *Vāyilār* illustrate this aspect of worship which may be looked upon as *Yōga*: *Perumiḻalaik kuṟumpar* and *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār* are looked upon as great *Yōgis.*

The next important head under which the activities of the saints could be brought is the worship of the *Śaivite aṭiyārs.* First come those saints who were great because of their admiration and reverence for the three great *Tēvāram* saints. *Kaṇanāta* worshipped *Campantar. Appūti* worshipped *Appar. Perumiḻalaikkuṟumpar* worshipped *Ārūrar.* There are also other saints who were contemporaries of these great men. Irrespective of the greatness of *Śaivite aṭiyārs,* it was thought that one should offer one's service to the *aṭiyārs* in general looking upon them as no other than the Lord *Śiva* Himself.

The reverence for the outward form is clearly brought out in the stories of *Eṉātiṉātar, Meypporuḷ Nāyaṉār, Pukalccōḻa Nāyaṉār* and *Kalarirrarivār Nāyaṉār.* The saints were prepared to offer their all and sacrifice their dearest and nearest as well as their own lives. This is explained as *Caryā mārga.* Following the path of the Lord, according to *Vaiṣṇavism,* is *Sāra Dharma,* the good; surrender to Him is *Sāratara Dharma,* the better; surrender to His followers is *Sāratama Dharma,* the best. Therefore, it is said: "God would forgive an offence to Himself but an offence to His devotees—*aṭiyārs*—was unpardonable: *Bhāgavatāpachāra* was more heinous than *Bhagavadapachāra".* The cult of the worship of *Śaivite aṭiyārs* has taken a definite form by the time of *Ārūrar. Viraṉmiṇṭar* laid the emphasis on the worship of the *aṭiyārs* rather than on the worship of God Himself. *Tirumūlar* explains the significance of this cult in his famous verse in *Tirumantiram:*

"Paṭamāṭak kōyiṟ pakavaṟkoṉ ṟīyil
Naṭamāṭak kōyil namparkkaṅ kākā
Naṭamāṭak kōyil namparkkoṉ ṟīyil
Paṭamāṭak kōyiṟ pakavaṟka tāmē".[2]

(*Paṭamāṭum, Naṭamāṭum, Naṭamāṭum* and *Paṭamāṭum* are other readings for *Paṭamāṭa, Naṭamāṭa, Naṭamāṭa* and *Paṭamāṭa*).

There remain the great saints and mystic philosophers who have given their experience in the forms of *hymns* and verses containing the quintessence of *Jñānamārga,* such as *Campantar, Appar, Ārūrar, Kāraikkāl ammaiyār, Tirumūlar, Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavar, Aiyaṭikaḷ* and possibly also *Tirunīlakaṇṭa Yāḻppāṇar* who expressed the great truths of *Campantar's* poems in the language of music.

II

SĀDHAKAS AND SIDDHAS:

We have been talking of *Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga* and *Jñāna mārgas* in relation to these saints, but these are only the means of attaining the final realization or *siddhi.* A reference to these *mārgas* can be justified only if we look upon these saints as *sādhakas* or probationers. But, if they are *siddhas,* who have attained realization, it will be absurd to speak of these means. But, as will be

2. 1857.

explained or pointed out later, we can look upon these *mārgas* (paths) as being followed by even the released souls for *'lōkasaṅgraha'* — for the benefit of the world at large: *"Kaṭṭu mayakkam aṟuttavar kaitoḻutu ēttumiṭam"* says *Ārūrar*.[2a] *Bhakti* itself is distinguished as *'Parā bhakti'* or *'Sādhya bhakti'* which is nothing else than the immortal bliss of freedom (*Mukti*) itself. It comes unsolicited, by the Grace of God and self sacrifice. Upon gaining it, man realizes his perfection and divinity, and becomes thoroughly contented. He desires nothing more. He is then free from grief and hatred; he does not rejoice over anything, nor does he exert himself in the furtherance of self-interest. The realization makes him intoxicated and fascinated as it were, because he is completely immersed in the bliss of the *Paramātman*.

Cēkkiḻār brings out the greatness of these *siddhas* in the introductory part of the *Periyapurāṇam* called *Tirukkūṭṭacciṟappu*: "'Their mind is pure and white like the sacred ash besmeared on their body. Even if the elements go astray, their minds will not swerve from the love of God. To them gold and potsherd are the same. They care not even for *Mōkṣa*, if only they could be assured of loving worship. They have no burden other than the service of the Lord, these merciful lovers and heroes wanting in nothing (*vv.* 6-8)". *"Iccuvai tavira yāṉ pōy intiralōkam āḷum accuvai perinum vēṇṭēṉ"*.[2b] *"Paṭiyāyk kiṭantu uṉ pavaḷavāy kāṇpēṉē"*[3] are the oft quoted versions of the *Āḻvārs*. The verse of *Appar*,

'Kuṉitta puruvamum kovvaiccev vāyiṟ kumiṇciríppum
Paṉitta caṭaiyum pavaḷampōṉ mēṉiyiṟ pāḷveṇṇīṟum
Iṉitta muṭaiya eṭuttapoṟ pāṭamum kāṇappeṟṟāl
Maṉittap piṟaviyum vēṇṭuva tēyinta māṉillattē'[4]

best illustrates his mind as a *siddha*.

The question arises why they should follow any rules or rituals if they had become *'Jīvaṉmuktas'*. The *Nārada Bhakti Sūtras* give the answer: "Let a man have care for the scriptural teachings, even after his spiritual realization becomes well established. For, otherwise there is the risk of fall (of others). Social customs and practices also may be followed, in a like manner, to

2a. 7:10:7.
2b. *Tirumālai*, 2.
3. *Perumāḷ Tirumoḻi*, 4:9.
4. *H.* 81, *v.* 4.

that extent only; but activities like taking food, may be continued to the measure necessary for the preservation of health of the body until it falls off in its natural course."[5] As *Tirukkaḷiṟṟuppaṭiyār* puts it, though the saints may be behaving like ordinary men, they become identified with *Śiva* and all their acts are the acts of the Lord.[6] It is because of this *Śivajñānabōdham* in its last *sūtram* emphasizes temple worship and worship of the *aṭiyārs*:

> *"Cemmalar nōṉṟāḷ cēraloṭṭā*
> *Ammalaṅkaḻīi aṉparoṭu marīi*
> *Mālaṟa nēyam malintavar vēṭamum*
> *Ālayam tāṉum Araṉeṉat toḻumē".*

Ārūrar in enumerating the saints in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* would not have looked upon them as mere *Sādhakas*. He falls at their feet in almost every line of his verses because he feels that they have attained *siddhi* (realization).

III

SIGNIFICATION OF THE GROUPING OF AṬIYĀRS:

The penultimate verse of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai,* a verse which we have reserved for consideration here, is important as giving us an idea of his classification of the *Śaivite* saints. That verse is said to give a list of groups of *Śaivite* saints not specifically mentioned in that *hymn*. According to him the saints are classified as follows:

(1) *Pattarāyp paṇivār,* (2) *Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār,* (3) *Cittattaic civaṉpālē vaippār,* (4) *Tiruvārūrppiṟantār,* (5) *Muppōtum tirumēṉi tīṇṭuvār,* (6) *Muḻunīṟu pūciya muṉivar* and (7) *Appālum aṭic cārntār.*

Muppōtum tirumēṉi tīṇṭuvār are those who worship the *'liṅga'* thrice a day at the temple or elsewhere. *Cēkkiḻār* would take them as *Śaiva Brahmin* priests. But, as already mentioned, others like *Kaṇṇappar* and *Cākkiyar* could be brought under this head.

Tiruvārūrppiṟantār, as already noted, exemplify the cult of holy places connected with temple worship. Or, this may mean that the worshippers in a temple and all the people born in that holy place, appear to be sacred and holy, to be worshipped by all.

5. *Sūtras,* 12-14.
6. 12, 51-56, 64.

This gives us the high ideal these saints had about society, and service to society, without any distinction. It is not the followers of their religion alone that are looked upon as worthy of their service but all the people in general. The *Śaivites* have been thus living as far as their ideal is concerned in a classless and casteless society — a society of devotees.

Mulunīṟu pūciya muṉivar are those holy people who smear themselves with the sacred ash (*Vibhūti*) as the outward symbol for the inner purity of their heart.

Pattarāyp paṇivār are those who worship the *Śaivite aṭiyārs. 'Paṇital'* emphasizes bending low in humility and service.

Cittattaic civaṉpālē vaippār are those saints great for their mental worship and *yōga. Cittam* emphasizes the mental contemplation.

Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār then refers to poets. The emphasis is on the *karaṇa* — tongue or speech. They are the mystic poets like our *Tēvāram* authors.

It is thus clear that *Ārūrar* is emphasizing the very principles we had analysed in the philosophy of temple worship and holy places, the principle of mental worship, of mystic poetry, of the greatness of outward form and a reverential feeling therefor.

Appālum aṭiccārntār is mentioned to cover cases not mentioned anywhere else. *Cēkkiḻār* takes it as referring to the lovers of God beyond the limits of the *Tamiḻ* country and those who might have lived before and after the age of *Ārūrar,* thus conceiving a democratic family of the lovers of God in the whole Universe and of all times.

IV

NATURE OF THE WORSHIPPER — INTRODUCTION :

The various difficulties one feels in understanding *Tiruttoṇṭattokai,* may drive one to conclude that it was perhaps not from the pen of *Nampiyārūrar.* But the ideas contained therein are found in other verses of *Nampi Ārūrar.* Some of the names of the saints are referred to by *Nampi Ārūrar,* as already pointed out by us.[7] The philosophy of service to *bhaktas* has been deve-

7. *Part I* of this *Volume.*

loping both in *Śaivism* and *Vaiṣṇavism*. *Kulaśekhara's hymn, "Teṭṭaruntiṟattēṉ"* has become famous because of this philosophy; and provision has been made for reciting this *hymn* in the temples, as is borne out by very early inscriptions. *Nampi Ārūrar's* poems may be examined from this point of view.

The various forms of the Lord as described in the *Purāṇa* and as appealing to our poet have been described at length in our study of our poet's *purāṇic* mysticism.[8] That study gives us our poet's conception of his God. In the duality of the religious predicament of God and His worshipper, the Deity and the devotee, after an account of the nature of God, that of the worshipper is taken for consideration here:

V

WORSHIP — OFFERINGS :

The *pūjā* or worship by the *aṭiyārs* or followers of God is referred to by our *poet*[9] as *Pūcai* or *Pūcaṉai.* This forms part of *Kriyā mārga.* We have the descriptions of the worship by *Saṇḍēśvara,*[10] *Agastya,*[11] *Brahma,*[12] *Viṣṇu*[13] and the Mother Goddess.[14] *Muppōtum Tirumēṉi tīṇṭuvār* come under this head. The symbol, image, or idol of God is placed before the worshipper and God is felt or imagined to incarnate Himself in that form.[15] Usually this form is a *liṅga;* in another place we have explained the various kinds of *liṅgas.*[16] *Saṇḍēśvara* makes a *liṅga* out of sand.[17] *Agastya* makes a *'tāpara'* (*stāvara*) *liṅga, i.e.,* an immobile *liṅga.*[18]

V (a)

Offerings are made to this Lord incarnating in the image. Any leaf or a handful of water is enough to please the Lord who

8. *Vol., II.*
9. 7:9:2; 7:19:8; 7:30:6.
10. 7:16:3.
11. 7:65:5.
12. 7:16:10.
13. 7:19:2; 7:66:3.
14. 7:16:1; 7:61.
15. 7:16:3; 7:65:6.
16. *Vol.,* 1.
17. 7:16:3.
18. 7:65:5.

is hungering for the love of the souls. It may be any leaf but the worshippers see it is green; it may be any water but they see it is clear without any foam — "*Nocciyam paccilaiyāl nurai tīr puṉalāl toḻuvār*".[19] Our poet brings out this truth in his statement, "*Ilaiyāl aṉpāl ēttumavar*"[20] — 'Those who praise Him with leaves out of love'. Does not the Lord of the *Gītā* say that He accepts (eats) even leaves?[21] The Lord is pleased with the loving offering of flower.[22] *Viṣṇu* has offered his own eye when there was a shortage of flowers.[23]

But usually the worshippers do not stop with the leaves. They offer the Lord, flowers and they are fragrant flowers[24] blooming with all freshness[25] and beauty inviting the humming bees.[26] They offer the best of flowers.[27] All the flowers of the land are there for the Lord and the worshippers offer them as great *tapas*.[28] Of these flowers eight have become sacred to the *Śaivites* which are, '*puṉṉai*', '*veḷḷerukku*', '*caṉpakam*', '*nantiyāvaṭṭam*', '*nīlōtpalam*', '*pātiri*', '*alari*' and '*centāmarai*'.[29] They offer this with their own broad munificent hands.[30] Compare the *Gītā* calling them '*udārāh*'.[31] They offer it on his feet in a feeling of self-surrender — "*Aṭimēl alariṭṭu nalla toṇṭaṅkaṭi paravi*".[32] They themselves carry the water in a pot and the flowers, performing thus the service of the Lord who becomes pleased with them and dances.[33] They go all pure and holy after they had bathed every day without fail in water.[34] They pluck the flowers with their own hands and weave out a beautiful garland out of love which

19. 7:98·3.
20. 7.94:9.
21. "*Patram puṣpam phalam tōyam yō mē bhaktyā prayaccatih.......... asnāmi*"—*Bhagavatgītā*, 9:26.
22. 7:19:8.
23. 7:19:2; 7:66:
24. 7:8:3.
25. 7:41:9; 7:86:3.
26. 7:23:4.
27. 7:84:2.
28. 7:82:6.
29. 7:22:8.
30. 7:57:4; 7:84:2.
31. 7:18.
32. 7:22:2.
33. 7:6:5.
34. 7:30:3.

knows no break.[35] Flowers are offered in plenty.[36] The offering of water is also made and it is said that it is made eastward (to the Sun as a form of the Lord).[37] These offerings of flower and water are made to the accompaniment of the *mantras* which the worshippers recite.[38] Some offer these flowers with the *mantras* of the *Ṛg Vēda*.[39]

The water is not only given as offering but the Lord is bathed in water.[40] The Lord is bathed not only in water but also in the five sweet (*tēṉ*) things of the cow.[41] The five of the cow are — milk, curd, butter or ghee, cow-dung and cow-urine. Of these the milk occupies the pre-eminent position.[42] One may at once distinguish milk, curd and ghee from the other two and these are, therefore, specifically mentioned.[43] Honey also is mentioned as an article in which the Lord is bathed.[44] The word used is '*Tēṉ*' and this as already pointed out, refers also to the sweet fluids of the cow.[45] The idea behind this bath seems to be that the worshippers should realize that the Lord is the inner light within these various objects of worship and that the various organic processes are a divine mystery.

Indian life is characterized by the co-operation of the beast and the man. The cultivation is the basic occupation of this country and when the harvest is made, man gets his share of rice and the bull gets its share of straw and grass. The grass becomes the life blood of the cow but when the cow is the loving mother, its blood undergoes a wonderful and mysterious change by becoming the milk — the ideal food, containing in a miraculous way all the necessary elements in the right proportion. This milk undergoes further change into the curd, the best protein food, and the ghee, the best fat food, the milk becoming the curd in the stomach and the ghee being absorbed by the body in its digestible organic

35. 7:30:3; 7:94:2.
36. 7:83:2.
37. 7:78:4.
38. 7:30:6.
39. 7:78:3.
40. 7:88:3.
41. 7:17:4; 7:19:5; 7:40:7; 7:53:9; 7:61:8; 7:68:2; 7:87:6; 7:88:3; 7:97:3.
42. 7:61:8; 7:68:2.
43. 7:5:1; 7:15:6; 7:19:5; 7:84:7; 7:70:9.
44. 7:70:9.
45. 7:88:3.

form through the small intestines. The live process continues and the water and the undigested fibres are thrown out as refuse — the urine and the cow-dung — by the kidney and the colon respectively. This refuse is valued by men not only as the manure but also as the plaster for beautifying the mud walls and floors of their habitat. The biologists speak of the nitrogen cycle. Here comes in the co-operation of Nature and living beings. The refuse goes back to the land to enrich it with all that it had willingly given away for the growth of the plant on which we live. All this is looked upon by the *Hindus* and *Śaivites* including our Poet as a mystery explicable only as a divine consummation. In every one of the stages, God is found in all His creative glory and this is the significance of this bath of the cow's five (*pañcagavya*). *Abhiṣēka* may be generalized as revealing this inner truth of all the sweet things we love, as God. We offer God unto God and we partake of it as God, a wonderful transubstantiation. We, therefore, love, move and have our being in God.

Incense is also offered; *Bhaktas* worship Him with the rich fragrant smoke.[46] The worshippers besmear themselves with the sacred ash.[47] "*Mulunīṟu pūciya munivar*" are those great men.[48] Purification through a bath in water has already been referred to.[49]

Here, a distinction is made between '*Caryā*' and '*Kriyā*'. When one brings the flower, water, *etc.*, for the worship in the temple, that is when the *pūjā* is not one's own, it is *Caryā* — it is service — '*Toṇṭāṭal*' or *Toṇṭu pūṇal*[50] — taking up a vow of service;[51] '*Kuṟṟēval ceyyal*' — performing all menial services.[52] Has not *Kulaśēkharar* said that he will follow the Lord carrying the spittoon?[53] The *Bhaktas* are thus practising themselves for living in His service.[54] They take care of Him as a parent.[55] Those who perform worship in the temple are called '*Akattaṭimai*',[56] the ser-

46. 7:82:6.
47. 7:30:2; 7:30:6.
48. 7:39:10.
49. 7:30:3, *etc.*
50. 7:15:9.
51. 7:24:4.
52. 7:14:9; 7:17:1; 7:26:4; 7:30:8.
53. *Perumāḷ Tirumoḻi*—4:3.
54. 7:77:4.
55. *Pēnal*—7:56:5; 7:92:8.
56. 7:9:6.

vants of the interior like *Muruka Nāyaṉār* and *Pukaḻttuṇai Nāyaṉār.*

It must be noted that the *Caryā* mentioned in some of the references are really *Caryā* in *Jñāna;* for, the *Jñāni* who has realized God has to perform acts whilst alive and his *Caryā* is the *Caryā* in *Jñāna.*

Fruits intended for the beloved are also offered and this is mentioned with reference to the worship by a loving couple of monkeys which worship on the mountains at every one of the *Sandhyas* with water and flower.[57] *Kaṇṇappar's* story tells us that food also was offered to God.

Going round the Lord or the couple from the right side of the Lord is another item of this worship — *"Cūḻum valam ceytu".*[58] Circumambulation is referred to with reference to *Muttāṟu* which is conceived by our poet as his comrade in worship.[59]

VI

TIME OF WORSHIP:

This kind of worship is offered every day.[60] The morning worship[61] is important as it begins the day with the sacred thought. The phrases *'Toḻutēḻumaṉpar',*[62] *'Cintitteḻuvār',*[63] *'Vaḻipāṭucey-teḻuvār'*[64] and *'Niṉainteḻuvār'*[65] are important. The second word of these phrases is *'eḻuvār', i.e.,* those who wake up. The first words are *'Toḻutal'* (bowing down), *'Cintittal'* (think of Him), *'Vaḻi-pāṭal'* (worship Him) and *'Niṉaital'* (contemplate on Him). The phrases as they stand mean that worship occurs first and then the waking. This is an impossibility. Unless this worship is something like a dream-waking, it can occur only after one wakes up. Therefore, Subrahmanya Diksitar (the commentator on *Tamiḻ Prayōkavivēkam*) changes the word order and interprets them as *'Eḻuntu toḻuvār' etc.,* those who wake up and worship. This

57. 7:92:7.
58. 7:83:2.
59. 7:43:10.
60. 7:20:1; 7:50:7; 7:61:8.
61. 7:41:5.
62. 7:74:1.
63. 7:4:3.
64. 7:82:3.
65. 7:61:8.

is making prose of poetry. But this '*Eḻuntu toḻuvār*' is also referred to by our poet.[66] Hence these phrases should have a special significance. These phrases refer to a different mental state and these have been interpreted by *Parimēlaḻakar* and *Pērāciriyar* to mean that the worshippers always contemplate on God, that their last thought before they sleep is their worship of the Lord, that their first thought on waking up at dawn is the same worship and that, therefore, they wake up thus with the thought of worshipping the Lord. Worshipping and waking are said to occur simultaneously. As worship is the continuous act, it is spoken of in the past tense. This reveals a spiritual stage called '*Sahaja niṣṭā*'.

The worship is sometimes performed twice—'*Irupoḻutum*';[67] '*Irupōtum*',[68] at dawn and at dusk or at day and night.[69] Day and night may also mean always, when the worship will be '*Sahaja niṣṭā*'. But the worship in the morning and in the evening is clearly referred to—"*Kālaiyilum mālaiyilum*".[70] There is also the worship thrice a day. The *Sandhya* worship is offered at morning, noon and evening. Therefore, our poet also speaks of '*Canti mūṉṟu*'[71]—three *sandhyas*; '*Mūṉṟu pōtu*'[72]—at the three points of the day. This is described as two joints of the day morning and evening along with midday—"*Antiyum naṇpakalum*".[73] The expression "*Iravum elliyum pakalum*"[74] is not clear. Can we take '*Iravu*' to denote the evening, '*Elli*', morning and '*Pakal*', the midday? Then this expression will mean, worship at the three points of the day. Or, can we take the expression to mean, the night, the morning and the evening *sandhyas* and the midday? Then it will mean worship always, that is '*Sahaja niṣṭā*'. Every day at these *sandhis*, the Lord is adorned with flowers like the beautiful ruddy sky.[75] The worship at midnight (*Naṭunāḷ*) and day (*Pakal*) is also spoken of with reference to the 'single

66. 7:41:5.
67. 7:83:2.
68. 7:50:7.
69. 7:14:8.
70. 7:16:8.
71. 7:65:5.
72. 7:30:3.
73. 7:83:1.
74. 7:75:8.
75. 7:88:7.

legged Beings',[76] uttering the *Ṛg Vēda,* standing like elephants sprinkling the mountain spring water.[77] '*Naṭunāḷ*'[78] is midnight, probably because the ancient *Tamilians* counted the day from the midday to the next midday. The '*Naṭunāḷ*' worship will answer to the '*Ardhajāma pūjā*' of the present day.

All this is the '*pūcai*'[79] or '*pūcaṉai*'[80] which is called in *Tamiḻ* '*Vaḻipāṭu*'.[81] The life of this *pūjā* is *bhāvanā.* Our poet speaks of '*Pāvittal*'.[82] This *bhāvanā* has three levels: one is mental imagination, where mind is one with *prakṛti, i.e.,* with '*Paśu karaṇa*'; the second is the contemplation of the *jīva* which is with the '*Pati karaṇa*'; the third is the contemplation out of '*Aruḷ*' or Divine Grace. Here comes the mystic vision blossoming into beatific vision[83] The worshippers contemplate on Him and praise Him with offerings of flowers and frankincense.[84] This worship becomes a *tapas.*[85] The worship of the Mother Goddess is described as *tapas.*[86] Love is the soul of this *pūjā.*[87] Bowing down, falling at the feet, touching them with our head, and bringing hands together, one palm facing the other palm in what is called the *añjali* pose are all mentioned—"*Nīḷ nīḷ muṭi vāṉavar vantiṟaiñcum*";[88] "*Muṭiyāl vāṉavarkaḷ muyaṅkal*";[89] "*Aṭi toḻal*";[90] "*Aṭi vīḻtal*";[91] "*Aṭi toḻuvār*";[92] "*Kai toḻal*";[93] "*Kaikaḷāl kūppi*".[94] *Kūpputal* is *añjali.* *Vaṇaṅkutal* is bowing down:[95] "*Talaiyāl tāḻum*".[96]

76. 7:78:3.
77. 7:78:3.
78. 7:78:3.
79. 7:30:6.
80. 7:5:1; 7:9:2.
81. 7:82:3; 7:92:7.
82. 7:31:6; 7:48:1; 7:54:5; 7:57:
83. *Ciṟṟurai,* p. 124; *Pāṭiyam,* p. 402 of *Śivajñānabōdham.*
84. 7:82:6.
85. 7:82:6.
86. 7:16:1.
87. 7:94:9.
88. 7:3:9.
89. 7:26:7.
90. 7:14:12.
91. 7:4:10.
92. 7:82:3.
93. 7:14:8; 7:20:1; 7:57:8.
94. 7:22:5.
95. 7:8:3.
96. 7:94:9.

VII

TRIKARAṆA :

The worship is through all the *trikaraṇas* — body, speech and mind. The poet asserts that he has dedicated his head, tongue and mind to the services of the Lord.[97] The poetry is itself a worship as *Cēkkiḻār* says, *"Arccaṉai pāṭṭē ākum"*[97a] and this is a peculiar kind of worship in which our poet has specialized. These worshippers sing; they speak of Him in many ways; they compose verses of various rhythms. They cease not singing. Even as their speech becomes the art of poetry and music, their movements inspired by the thought of the Lord become the dance. They praise him in whatever way they are capable of—*"Vallatellām colli vāḻttal"*.[98] They sing his praises—*"Pōṟṟicaittal"*;[99] they praise His feet — *'Ukantētti'*.[100] They live in this praise of their love even as they live in His presence. *'Sōttu'* is their cry of refuge.[101] *'Aṭi pōṟṟi'*[102] is another form of this cry of self surrender.

Their uttering of the *mantras* is referred to.[103] There is again the repetition of the names of the Lord, His thousand names,[104] and His many names.[105] "I have been blessed with the repetition of your name";[106] "Thanks to my good old fortune" sings our poet. Learning the sacred name,[107] the name of All Power,[108] the worshippers praise Him with these names.[109] This practice has soaked through his body and the poet exclaims, "Even if I forget, my tongue shall utter the *mantra, Namaśśivāya"*.[110] Here also it is the mind which moves. "The Lord, He stands in the mouth of those who contemplate on Him with their mind".[111]

97. 7:14:1.
97a. *Tatut.*, 70.
98. 7:5:4.
99. 7:98:1.
100. 7:22:5.
101. 7:2:1; 7:67:4; 7:92:6.
102. 7:98:1.
103. 7:83:1.
104. 7:18:3; 7:44:7; 7:53:7; 7:56:1.
105. 7:48:9.
106. 7:66:4.
107. 7:3:8.
108. 7:82:5.
109. 7:48:9.
110. 7:48:1-9.
111. 7:19:10.

Learning His name has been referred to. It becomes thus an art and the worshippers practise this art. They learn it, listen to it and repeat thereby the greatness of the Lord, reciting, praising and contemplating on the various *hymns* of praises (probably *Tamil̲ hymns* and *Vēdic mantras*) full of the glory of words and their meanings.[112] The Lord thus is the meaning of all arts and becomes sympathetic with the *Sahṛdya* who experiences the art as the Seer.[113] "The worshippers recite and learn; they realize the meaning; they think of Lord's greatness; contemplate on it. Their hearts melt in love. Appropriate words come out as sound."[114] The words of praise as far as *Ārūrar* is concerned are *Tamil̲* words.[115] All these descriptions suggest the worshippers taking pleasure in these names even as the beloved does in the name of her lover.

Mind is much more important than the tongue and the body, for, it is the mind which moves them. Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh: *"Man̲attu mikkatu vāy veruvum"* is a familiar saying. *"Vāy veruvit tol̲utēn̲"*[116] sings our poet. We referred to the phrases *'Cintittel̲uvār'*,[117] *'nin̲aintel̲uvār'*[118] *etc.* The worshippers are steeped ever in this contemplation. It becomes a *sahajaniṣṭā,* where the contemplation with God as centre becomes as natural as our very breathing. The worshippers there sit, they lie, they walk, but all along, they think of Him and utter with all their heart, "He is our Lord".[119] They sit, stand and lie, but they praise Him always,[120] ....wherever they may be, they always think of Him[121] and He becomes one with them.[122] They think Him for long—*"Nīḷa nin̲aintu"*.[123] They think of Him and nothing else—*"Nun̲aiyē nin̲aintiruntēn̲"*;[124] *"Un̲aiyallāl in̲iyon̲r̲um uṇarēn̲ē"*.[125]

112. 7:16:5.
113. 7:59:3.
114. 7:84:2.
115. 7:69:4; 7:84:10.
116. 7:58:5.
117. 7:4:3.
118. 7:61:8.
119. 7:11:2.
120. 7:95:10.
121. 7:23:2.
122. 7:23:2.
123. 7:20:1.
124. 7:21:1.
125. 7:26:9.

VIII

CITTATTAIC CIVAṈPĀLĒ VAIPPĀR:

The importance of the mind even in *pūjā* has been already brought out. The verbs used are, *"Eṇṇal"*;[126] *"Karututal"*;[127] *"Cintittal"*;[128] *"Uṇartal"*;[129] *"Aṟital"*;[130] *"Uḷkutal"*;[131] *"Pāvittal"*;[132] *"Niṉaital"*;[133] *"Paraval"*;[134] *"Cintai ceytal"*.[135] The nouns used are, *"Uḷḷam"*;[136] *"Cittam"*;[137] *"Cintai"*;[138] *"Mati"*;[139] *"Maṉam"*;[140] *"Neñcu"*;[141] *"Niṉaippu"*;[142] *"Karuttu"*;[143] and *"Bhāvanā"*.[144] Sometimes these words are used as synonyms; sometimes they are distinguished. *Namputal,*[145] *Kuḻaital,*[146] *Kacital,*[147] *Nekutal,*[148] *Urukutal,*[149] *Ēlutal,*[150] *Aṭicērtal,*[151] *Ceṟital,*[152] *Teḷital,*[153] *Teri-tal,*[154] *Cikkaṉavu,*[155] *Tēṟal*[155a] are also used with reference to these mental acts. What is important in this worship is *'Cintai'* which contemplates and in many places it is the *'Cintaṉai'* and its acts

126. 7:11:2; 7:75:6.
127. 7:6:7; 7:90:8.
128. 7:4:3; 7:61::1; 7:61:8; 7:67:7; 7:77:1.
129. 7:84:3; 7:84:8.
130. 7:74:2, 3, 4.
131. 7:59:7; 7:61:10; 7:92:4; 7:96:5; 7:97:10.
132. 7:57:2; 7:59:10; 7:61:2.
133. 7:3:4; 7:11:7; 7:61:8; 7:68:4; 7:87:2; 7:91:4; 7:96:5; 7:97:2 3.
134. 7:62:3; 7:77:1.
135. 7:30:7.
136. 7:61:10; 7:64:5; 7:67:1.
137. 7:56:6; 7:62:3.
138. 7:57:3; 7:59:3; 7:61:8; 7:77:8
139. 7:56:8; 7:59:3.
140. 7:67:2; 7:61:2; 7:59:3; 7:68:4; 7:87:2.
141. 7:84:7.
142. 7:87:2.
143. 7:58:3; 7:62:8; 7:14:8; 7:51:9.
144. 7:57:2; 7:61:2.
145. 7:88:1.
146. 7:14:9; 7:90:8.
147. 7:16:8; 7:63:10.
148. 7:11:7.
149. 7:68:2.
150. 7:75:3.
151. 7:75:1, 4, 5 *etc.*
152. 7:59:5; 7:73:4.
153. 7:59:5.
154. 7:57:10; 7:80:4.
155. 7:59:5.
155a. 7:4:3.

that are referred to. Does not *Cēkkiḻār* describing *Ārūrar* whilst the latter was worshipping the Lord of *Tillai,* state that the four internal organs of the mind of *Ārūrar* became this '*Cintai*'—"*Aḷapparuṁ karaṇaṅkaḷ nāṉkum cintaiyē āka*"?[156]

Maṉam, Buddhi, Cittam and *Ahaṅkāram* are distinguished as internal organs or organizations of mental activity. *Maṉam* perceives and builds its castles in the air with all its consequent doubts and confusions; this is often compared to the monkey wandering about without any rest. *Buddhi,* like the serpent winding through to its place of rest understands the *pros* and *cons* of a problem for arriving at a judgment; it is the faculty of decision; *Cittam* is the conative faculty of pursuing this decision like the dog following its scent. *Ahaṅkāram* is the feeling of 'I'—the feeling of self or egoism moving proudly and majestically like the elephant as though it is the master of everything. "The oscillating mind should be stabilized, the arguing *buddhi* should be let alone with the Reality, the Ego which feels there is nothing comparable to it should be subdued, then, '*Cittam*' will bring our Greatness (the *Mahat* or the Absolute) even where it stands": (This is one of the invaluable versions of the *Tamiḻ Upaniṭatam,* consisting of 32 such versions or verses). The internal organs have thus to be transformed by a re-orientation. When our poet speaks of these, he must be taken to be referring to such transformed organs all re-oriented towards God. The mind ordinarily a slave to the world and the passions which are evanescent, develops the Universe as consciousness (*Akaṇṭākāra vṛtti*) in its attempt at aiming at the Absolute; when that is developed, mind is said to become burnt itself away, like the torch setting fire to a heap of wood and being itself burnt away along with other logs of wood, the whole lot becoming the glorious bonfire. This is according to a verse in *Tamiḻ Upaniṭatam.*[157]

In the *Sāṁkya* Philosophy *Maṉam, Buddhi* and *Ahaṅkāram* are alone emphasized and the *Śaiva Siddhānta* following this philosophy looks upon '*cittam*' as the second stage of activity of the mind. *Śivajñāna Māpāṭiyam* explains these:

"In every perception, there are certain sensations; for instance, we have the sensation of yellow colour, a round form and a sweet

156. *Taṭut.,* 106.
157. V., 1.

smell at the sight of a mango—a meaning is added on to these by memory and the resultant is the perception of the mango. The mere sight, a dim awareness that something is before us as an object is called undifferentiated perception—'*Nirvikalpak kāṭci*'. When it is perceived as a particular object placed within a particular class, then it is called differentiated perception—'*Savikalpakkāṭci*'. As soon as there is a dim awareness, the activity of what is called '*manas*', the desire for knowing the object begins. Memory is searched and old recollections come to light. A suggestion that what is appearing may be this particular thing develops. This is the mental activity of '*cittam*' what is considered to be a sort of *maṇas*. All the possible meanings are put in the melting pot but there is not a definite conclusion arrived at as yet. The mind is still indefinite and doubtful. In the next stage the mental activity of egoism or '*ahaṅkāra*' comes into play and the man is attempting at solving the puzzle or the challenge of the object. The emphasis is on the ego or its volition. The last stage is reached when the man decides that the object is any one particular variety of fruit or mango. This is the result of the activity of '*buddhi*'.[158]

'*Niṉaippu*' is recollection, a freedom from distraction; '*Karuttu*' emphasises certain amount of feeling and decision or will.[159] Worshipping with all one's heart is spoken of as '*Karuttiṉāl kai toḻutal*'.[160] It is possible to interpret this as mental worship also. '*Cintittal*' is *maṉaṉam;* this is connected with '*cintaṉai*'—*the dīrgha cintanā.* Our poet speaks of *cintai, maṉam* and *mati* all in one verse.[161] Here, *cintai* may be *cittam; mati,* the *buddhi* and *maṉam,* the *maṉam* of the above classification. Or, they may stand for *ahaṅkāram, maṉam* and *buddhi* which are alone mentioned in the old *Sāṁkhya Philosophy*. Before these internal organs, stands the world as object, making possible the enjoyment according to *karma*—'*Vitiyiṉ payaṉ*'.[162] It must be pointed out that in worship and contemplation, *cittam* plays the important part and these various words may after all refer to that.

158. *Śivajñānabōdha Śivajñāna Māpāṭiyam* by *Śivajñāna Svamikaḷ*—*Samājam Edition*, *pp.* 229-237.

159. See '*Kātalālē karutum*'—7:6:7; '*Karutumā karutakiṟṟal*'—7:90:8.

160. 7:14:8.

161. 7:59:4.

162. 7:41:5.

"*Bhāvanā*" is imagination. This is of various kinds: 1. Imagination through mind—a mere mental experience; 2. Imagination without mind; 3. Imagination which is none of these two; 4. Imagination like that of a starving man imagining that he is feasting. All these are either unreal or mere mental affections. But, the vision of the Soul is real; the Soul is inspired and embraced and kissed by the inner Lord. The *bhāvanā*, then, is the beatific vision and real divine experience, thanks to the '*Aruḷ*' (Grace) of God. The mental imagination blossoms, if there is the sincerity of the Soul, into the supra mental real imagination or the beatific vision and experience of the Lord.[163] There is also the '*Śivōham Bhāvanā*' — the contemplation of *Śiva* as the Self or the Self of Self. The poet refers to the difficulties of this *bhāvanā* — "*Uṉṉaippōl eṉṉaip pāvikkamāṭṭēṉ*".[164] '*Śivōham*' — 'I am *Śiva*'; '*Nāṉāya Paraṉ*'[165] is the form of the cotemplation arising out of the teaching of the *Guru* or Master, '*Tattvamasi*'—'That thou art'.[166] *Bhāvanā* is interpreted by *Parimēlaḻakar* as *Nididhyāsana,* the final stage of the realization of the message of '*Tat tvam asi*'.[167]

IX

ŚRAVAṆA, MANANA AND NIDIDHYĀSANA:

The *Upaniṣad, Bṛhad Araṇyaka* speaks of *Śravaṇa, Manana* and *Nididhyāsana.* There is the *upadēsa* of the Master, the revelation of the Truth. The disciple listens to it and learns the Truth. This is *Śravaṇa.* "*Kēṭṭēṉ kēṭpatellām*"[168] says our poet — 'I have listened to all that has to be heard, and learnt them'. "*Piṟavāmai kēṭṭoḻintēṉ*"[169] — 'I have learnt and experienced birthlessness!' This is not mere study, for the poet asserts that this is a message of birthlessness. '*Kēṭṭal*' is '*aṟital*', knowing, though literally it means hearing or listening to. It is not merely hearing by the ear; it is hearing in the mind. It is real understanding where the knowledge learnt soaks through the soul so as to transform it. 'To know is to be'; *c.f.* "*Brahmavit Brahmaiva bhavati*". '*Manana*' is contemplating on this truth, and removing thereby all doubts,

163. *Śivajñānabōdha Māpāṭiyam, p.* 408.
164. 7:54:5.
165. 7:38:4.
166. V. 2, *Śivajñānabōdham.*
167. Commentary of *Tirukkuṟaḷ,* 358.
168. 7:21:2.
169. 7:21:2.

so that the realization may result. *Nididhyāsana* is the clarity of the vision of Truth. *Niṣṭā* follows : it is standing firm in that realization; it is the stage of inseparable communion or unity with God. The *Vaiṣṇavite* commentary 'The *Īṭu*' interprets the terms *Terivu, Niṉaivu* and *Eṇṇutal* as referring to the *Śravaṇa, Manana* and *Nididhyāsana.*[170] *Śivajñāna Yōgi* interprets the words *Śravaṇa, Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* as *Kēṭṭal, Cintittal* and *Teḷital*[171] and *Parimēlaḻakar* translates them as *Kēḷvi, Vimarisam (Vimarśa)* and *Pāvaṉai (Bhāvanā)*.[172] *Śivajñāna Yōgi* interprets *'Uṇartal'* as *Pāvittal (Bhāvanā)*.[173]

In *hymn* No. 86, our poet uses the terms, *'Aṟivu'*,[174] *'Niṉaivu'*,[175] *'Uṇarvu'*[176] and *'Cārvu'*.[177] One may interpret *'Aṟivu'* as learning through *Śravaṇa; 'Niṉaivu'* as *Manana,* and *'Uṇarvu'* as *Nididhyāsana.* In that *hymn* the poet speaks of the *Jñāni* ever speaking of Him; ever praising Him; ever being in His presence in all his acts. *'Cārvu'* may mean, not the first approach but the final complete self-surrender; the final communion — the *'Prapatti'* or *'Āṉma nivētanam'*, referring to what the *Gītā* gives as its final message : *"Sarva dharmān parityajya mām ēkam śaraṇam vraja"*.[178] *'Aṭi vīḻtal'*,[179] *'Aṭi aṭaital'*[180] and *'Aṭi cērtal'*[181] may be taken as referring to this *Niṣṭā.* The poet speaks of *'Ēlutal'*[182] receiving or carrying the truth, which may be taken to be *Śravaṇa;* of *'Ēttutal'*[183]—meditation so as to blossom into vision, which may be taken as *Manana;* of *'Eṇṇutal'*[184] which may be taken as *Nididhyāsana.* Here *'Aṭi cērtal*[185] which may be taken as *Niṣṭā* is also mentioned. The 59th *hymn* (verse 5) speaks of *'Ceṟivu'*, the attachment of the mind to

170. Commentary on *vi, ix,* 11.
171. *Śivajñānabōdham, Māpāṭiyam.*
172. *Tirukkuṟal,* 357.
173. *Ibid.,* p. 512.
174. 7:86:7.
175. 7:86:8.
176. 7:86:2.
177. 7:86:1.
178. 18:66.
179. 7:4:10.
180. 7:55:1-9.
181. 7:75:1, 4, 5, 9.
182. 7:75:3.
183. 7:75:8.
184. 7:75:6.
185. 7:75:1, 4, 5, 9.

the Lord. Probably this is the result of *Śravaṇa;* this is the contemplation and meditation and the mental communion. Then this must be taken as *Manana.* The poet next speaks of '*Teḷivu*',[186] the clarity of vision which is the result of *Nididhyāsana.* Out of the clearness of vision and of the firmness of conviction comes the unloosening embrace of real communion or identity—'*Cikkaṉavu*'.[187] Does not *Māṇikkavācakar* say, '*Uṉṉaic cikkeṉappiṭittēṉ*'?[188]

In passing it may be added that *Śravaṇa, Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* and *Niṣṭā* are related to the *Śaivite Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga* and *Jñāna* paths. *Śravaṇa* is said to be *Caryā* in *Jñāna; Manana, Kriyā* in *Jñāna; Nididhyāsana, Yōga* in *Jñāna* and *Niṣṭā, Jñāna* in *Jñāna.*[189] *Vallabhāchārya* speaks of *Bhakti* being developed by deep faith or *Śravaṇa,*[190] loving remembrance or *manana*[191] and devotional music or *Saṁkīrtana* which he places in the place of *Nididhyāsana.* This throws a flood of light on the correct conception of the musical compositions of *Ārūrar.* But all this is of *Śāstrīya Bhakti* which later on bursts all limits to become *Puṣṭi Bhakti.* This points out the inadequacy of our attempt at restricting the thoughts of our poet to the traditional dimensions.

X

YŌGA :

Our poet speaks not only of *Caryā* and *Kriyā* both physical and mental but also of *Yōga.* What has been described above is in a way *Yōga.* But the *Yōga* system refers to the various stages of contemplation. First is *Pratyāhāra* — the introversion or the looking in; the Second is *Dhāraṇā,* where the contemplation becomes concentrated and continuous like the flow of a liquid, unlike the intermittent thoughts of the previous stage; the Third is *Dhyāna* — the mental retention. The Fourth is *Samādhi* or spiritual unity. Our poet speaks of "*Karutumā karutakiṟṟār*";[192] "*Karuttil ummaik karutuvārkaḷ*";[193] this may be *Pratyāhāra.* "*Cittam oru neṟikkē*

186. 7:59:5.
187. 7:59:5.
188. *Tiruvācakam-Piṭitta pattu:* 1-10.
189. *Śivajñāna Māpāṭiyam, pp.* 471, 472.
190. *Namputal,* 7:63:7 of *Ārūrar.*
191. *Kātalālē karututal,* 7:6:7.
192. 7:90:8.
193. 7:6:4.

vaittal" is the *Dhāraṇā* leading to *Dhyāna*. *Niṉaivu* will be *Dhyāna* leading to *Samādhi* as a *result* of which the Lord occupies the whole mind leaving no room for anything else, "*Niṉaivārtam uḷḷattē niṟaintu tōṉṟum*".[194]

The *Kuṇḍalini* — the Serpent Power — the *Yōgi's* divine power—is said to sleep at the lower end of the vertebral column. It has to be awakened when it rises up to the crown and the beyond. The six *cakras* or mystic centres in the body are, (1) *Mūlādhāram,* (2) *Svādhiṣṭhānam,* (3) *Maṇipūrakam,* (4) *Anāhatam,* (5) *Viśuddhi,* and (6) *Ājñā* respectively at (1) the base of the spinal column, in (2) the region of the genitals, (3) abdomen (navel), (4) heart, (5) throat and (6) in the forehead between the two eyes.[195]

Our poet exclaims, "I will search four fingers breadth above the navel and there I shall dance" — "*Nāṭuvaṉ nāṭuvaṉ nāpikku mēlē ōr nālviral. . . .āṭuvaṉ āṭuvaṉ*"[196] reminding us of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* "When the Self chooses, unto Him, He reveals Himself".[197] The significance of this statement of our poet cannot be explained before further researches are made in the *Yōgaśāstra. Maṇipūrakam* is near the navel; *Svādiṣṭhānam* is four fingers below the navel. Is '*mēl*' to be interpreted as '*kīḻ*'? The *cakra* above the navel is *Anāhata* of the heart. The *Āgamas* speak of the mental *pūjā* conceiving the Universe or *Aṇḍa* being in the *Piṇḍa* or the body, starting from the navel in the form of the lotus on which the Lord as the Great Beyond sits. There is the flower stalk of this lotus — eight finger breadth in length. The lotus bends down; possibly it reaches the midway of the stalk — above four finger breadth from the navel. If this were so, our poet may be referring to this meditation.

> "*Maṉ mutal nāḷamalar vittai kalārūpam*
> *Eṇṇiya Īcar Catāśivamum — Naṇṇiṟ*
> *Kalaiyuruvā nātamām Cattiyataṉ kaṇṇām*
> *Nilai atilām accivaṉ nēr*".[198]

The twenty-four *tattvas* from *Pṛthvī* upwards form the stalk of the lotus. The seven *Vidhyā Tattvas* along with *Śuddha Vidhyā*

194. 7:30:2.
195. *Shaktī* and *Shakta* by *Woodroffe,* p. 682.
196. 7:45:9.
197. III.ii.2.
198. *Śivajñānabōdham, Ciṟṟurai,* p. 186.

form its eight petals. *Īśvara Tattva* and *Śadāśiva Tattva* form the sixty four stamens. *Śakti Tattva* forms the pericarp. The *Śiva Tattva* forms the (51) seeds, inside the pericarp. *Śiva's* feet stand on this lotus of the heart. Worship them (through *pañcākṣara*).

XI

JÑĀNA :

The final state is communion or identity. That is *Jñāna*. It is spoken of as love. In all that has been described, therefore, what is important is the love which according to *Tirumūlar* is nothing but *Śiva*.[199] Love transmuted is God. *'Kātaṉmai'*,[200] *'Kātal'*,[201] *'Nēcam'*,[202] *'Pittam'*,[203] *'Aṉpu'*,[204] are the words used by our poet. It is a melting of the heart: *'Nekutal'*[205] *'Kacital'*,[206] *'Īram'*, [207] *'Kuḻaivu'*.[208] Love is a union and inseparability and both these are emphasized: *"Kalantuṉaik kātalittāṭ ceykirpār"*;[209] *"Piriyātu uḷki"*;[210] *"Piriyāta aṉpar"*.[211] This Divine Love is universal Love and *Jñānīs* are characterized by their love and sympathy: *'Kuḻaivu'*,[212] *'Īram'*.[213]

199. *Tirumantiram*, 70.
200. 7:26:7.
201. 7:6:7.
202. 7:19:2.
203. 7:43:11.
204. 7:7:7.
205. 7:11:7.
206. 7:16:8.
207. 7:75:7.
208. 7:14:9; 7:67:3.
209. 7:63:9.
210. 7:90:2.
211. 7:90:3.
212. 7:67:3.
213. 7:75:7.

CHAPTER II

THE CULT OF AṬIYĀRS

I

PATTARĀYPPAṆIVĀR :

We referred to the cult of *Aṭiyārs'* worship — the worship of the *Aṭiyārs*—being considered greater than the worship of *Śiva.* Is that not the philosophy of *Viṟaṉmiṇṭar,* which is said to have given birth to the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai?* Our poet also expresses this truth elsewhere in his poems. *Pattarāyppaṇivār* are the followers of this cult who worship the *Bhaktas* and make preparations for their *pūjā*—a kind of *Caryā* in *Jñāna.* Though a distinction has been made, this does not create any water tight compartments. Saints of one group are found to be saints of other groups as well. In our poet himself we find the aspects of all these, though we may speak of him as *Paramaṉaiyē Pāṭuvār.*

Our poet calls himself, "*Paramaṉaiyē paṇiyac cittam vaitta toṇṭar toṇṭaṉ*"[1] — 'I am the servant of the servants of those who resolved with all their heart to worship the Lord'. He remonstrates in another place, 'I have become not only His servant, but also the servant of His servants'—"*Orumaiyē......atiyēṉ, aṭiyavarkkaṭiyaṉum āṉēṉ*".[2] Again he confesses, 'Even if you will not get attached to me, I am always attached to you; I have become the slave of those who take refuge in your feet, yet I have not left off singing your praises'—"*Oṭṭī rākilum oṭṭuvaṉ aṭiyēṉ ummaṭi yaṭaintavark kaṭimaip paṭṭēṉākilum pāṭuta loḻiyēṉ*".[3] In the *Tirumaḻapāṭi hymn,*[4] the chorus of the song is, "Whom else could I think of, except you?" and for stressing this idea he exclaims, 'I am your servant and I have long long ago assumed the service to all the servants of your servants'—"*Paṇṭē niṉṉaṭiyēṉ aṭiyār aṭiyārkaṭkellām toṇṭē pūṇṭoḻintēṉ*".[5] When he sings of the *Tirukkētāram* in the north, he is reminded of this idea and again confesses

1. 7:7:11.
2. 7:14:10.
3. 7:15:5.
4. 7:24.
5. 7:24:4.

"Civaṉaṭiyārkaḷuk kaṭiyāṉ aṭittoṇṭaṉ"[6] — 'I am the slave of the servant of the servants of *Śiva'*.

There are whole *hymns* expressing this idea of surrender to the *Bhaktas.* The *Tiruvālaṅkāṭu hymn*[7] has, as it were, for its chorus for every one of its verses the phrase, *"Ālaṅkāṭā uṉ aṭiyārk-kaṭiyēṉ āvēṉē"*—'O, Lord of *Ālaṅkāṭu*! I shall become the servant of your servants'. It looks as though the saint is here re-dedicating himself to the service of the *Bhaktas.* The *Tiruvā-ṉaikkā hymn*[8] in every one of its verses expresses the idea that those who take refuge in the Lord are his own Lords. The *Pañcākṣara hymn*[9] of *Koṭumuṭi,* as already pointed out, expresses the idea that his realization of the truth of *Pañcākṣaram* has brought him the birthless state. He also expresses the idea implied therein, that when he forgets this truth he is no more than a dead man.[10] But *Pañcākṣara* is interpreted not only as 'I am not mine but *Śiva's*', but also as, 'I am not mine but *Śiva's* servants' *i.e.,* I belong to the servants of *Śiva'*, because it being *Śiva's* amounts to being the servant of the servants of *Śiva.* It is because of this that the second verse of the *hymn No.* 48, instead of saying that he would be a dead man if he forgets the Lord, he states that he would be a dead man when he slights the *Bhaktas* of the Lord—*"Iṭṭaṉum aṭi ēttuvār ikaḻntiṭṭa nāḷ marantiṭṭa nāḷ keṭṭa nāḷ ivai eṉṟalāṟ karutēṉ"*.[11]

The servants of the Lord are in a sense our guides showing us the way. *Nampi Ārūrar* says that he was seeing the *aṭiyavar* worship the Lord and he went imitating them or went under their cover—*"Ayalavar paravavum aṭiyavar toḻavum aṉparkaḷ cāyaluḷ aṭaiyaluṟ ṟiruntēṉ"*.[12] We had already referred to the other verse wherein he exclaims, "When am I to worship you with flowers and bubbling love, realizing that all that the *aṭiyārs* sing is about you".[13] These guides are the messengers of God who introduce us to God. *Hymn* 73 is addressed from this point of view to the *Bhaktas* begging them to inquire of the Lord if he would accept

6. 7:78:10.
7. 7:52.
8. 7:75.
9. 7:48.
10. 48:2, 3.
11. 7:48:2.
12. 7:58:7.
13. 7:84:2.

Nampi Ārūrar as his servant—"*Iruppatum Ārūr avar emmaiyum āḷvarō keḷīr*".[14] The *hymn* 44 seems also to be addressed to the *Bhaktas* raising various questions about His *purāṇic* personality. The third and the fourth verses have explicit reference to '*Toṇṭars*' begging them not to speak harsh words and not to speak of separation. The 33rd *hymn* is also addressed to those who worship the Lord as they like—"*Numakkicaiyumā* (or *vallavā*) *niṉaintēttuvīr*".[15] Here also *Nampi Ārūrar* raises the various *purāṇic* descriptions of the Lord in the form of rhetoric interrogations. The last verse of this *hymn* makes it clear that it is addressed to the *Bhaktas*, "*Paṭicey ṇīrmaiyiṟ pattarkāḷ paṇintēttiṉēṉ paṇiyīraruḷ*".[16]

In the *hymns* of *Āḻvārs* and *Nāyaṉmārs*, there occur some requests to the birds to carry the message of the love-sick maiden to the Lord. The *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators have always interpreted these birds as the *Bhaktas*, as spiritual guides carrying the message to the Lord.[17] *Hymn* 37 has to be interpreted in this manner. Therefore, the philosophy of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* is not at all foreign to the other *hymns* of *Ārūrar*. He takes a pride in calling himself a '*Toṇṭaṉ*';[18] '*Aṭittoṇṭaṉ*';[19] '*Toṇṭar toṇṭaṉ*'.[20]

It was the common belief in that age that for a full blown *Bhakta* to be born, his previous seven generations should have been pure and should have been worshipping the Lord. In some places it is possible to interpret that what is referred to is not the previous generations but one's own previous births. Probably we will not be far from the truth if we conclude that both the ideas are included: "*Orumaiyē alleṉ eḻumaiyum aṭiyēṉ*"[21]—' I am not in one birth alone your servant, but in seven births'; "*Naṟṟavai eṉṉaip peṟṟa muṟṟavai tammaṉai tantaikkum tavvaikkum tampirāṉār*";[22] "*Eṉakkiṉiyavaṉ tamarkkiṉiyavaṉ eḻumaiyum*

14. 7:73.
15. 2, 3, 6, 7.
16. 7:33:10.
17. See *Ācārya Hṛdayam, III*, 1-7.
18. 7:6:10; 7:18:10; 7:48:10; 7:59:11; 7:77:11; 7:92:10.
19. 7:3:10; 7:21:10; 7:28:10; 7:43:11; 7:44:10; 7:51:12; 7:78:10; 7:80:10 7:86:10.
20. 7:7:11.
21. 7:14:11.
22. 7:18:7: See under *H.* 18, already discussed, *Vol. III.*

maṉakkiṉiyavaṉ"[23]—'He is sweet unto me, sweet unto my people, of seven generations, sweet unto their mind'.

II

CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAINTS:

Our study so far reveals that *Ārūrar* has been referring to the groups of saints enumerated in the verse beginning with '*Pattarāyp paṇivār*' in the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*. We may here group together his references to the various kinds of *Bhaktas* for proving that this verse beginning with '*Pattarāyppaṇivār*' is in his mind and that verse explains our poet's outlook on religion.

Our poet speaks of *Aṭiyār*,[24] *Toṇṭar*,[25] *Pattar*,[26] *Cittar*[27] *and Aṉpar*[28] emphasizing respectively *Aṭimai*—absolute self-surrender, *Toṇṭu*—service, *Bhakti*—reverential love, *Citti* (*Siddhi*)—spiritual realization and *Aṉpu*—love. These ideas are also found combined in '*Aṭittoṇṭar*,'[29] '*Pattākiya toṇṭar*'.[30] Most often our poet like his predecessors uses the phrase '*Pattar Cittar*':[31] *Bhaktas* or devotees and *Siddhas* or those who are *Jīvanmuktas*. In other places, he speaks of *Aṉpar, Toṇṭar* and *Pattar*.[32] He sings in that verse,[33] "*Āṭumiṉ aṉpuṭaiyīr*"—'You lovers dance'; "*Aṭikkāṭpaṭṭa tūḷi koṇṭu cūṭumiṉ toṇṭaruḷḷīr*"—'You *toṇṭars*, who have dedicated yourselves to the service of the Lord, crown yourselves with the dust of the feet of the Lord's followers'; "*Umarōṭu emar cūḻa vantu vāṭumiv vāḻkkaitaṉṉai varuntāmal tiruntacceṉṟu pāṭumiṉ pattaruḷḷīr*" — '*Bhaktas* or devotees! let your people and our people come together and improve and reform this life which is a life of lightning of suffering'. *Pattar* and *Aṉpar* are here found mentioned together; therefore, the first must refer to *Sādhaka Bhaktas;* the second to *Sādhya Bhaktas,* where *Aṉpar* or *Siddhas* dance in the rapture of divine bliss beyond words. *Toṇṭar* will be those who serve. The word, '*Aṉpar*' will be emphasizing the mind,

23. 7:72:1.
24. 7:53:10.
25. 7:7:11.
26. 7:52:10.
27. 7:52:10.
28. 7:58:7.
29. 7:71:10.
30. 7:80:1.
31. 7:36:8; 7:52:10.
32. 7:22:3.
33. 7:22, *v.*, 3.

'Tontar', the bodily activity and *'Pattar'*, the speech aspect. It is because of this we have not chosen to take the words *'tūlikontu'* to go along with *'āṭumin anpuṭaiyīr'* though such an interpretation will be justified according to the conception of the age as learnt from *Kulaśēkhara Āḻvār*: *"Tontar aṭippoṭi āṭā nām peṟil"*.[34] In discussing the *Kāpāli* form of the Lord, we had to interpret the *Bhūtas, Pēy* and *Pāriṭam'*[35] in a similar way, as referring to these three classes.[36] *'Pattarāyp paṇivār'*, *'Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār'*, *'Cittattaic Civaṉpāle vaittār'*—these are the three classes mentioned in the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*,[37] which correspond to the three classes mentioned here; only the name *'Pattar'* is used there for *'Toṇṭar'* here.

He speaks of the greatness of the *Aṭiyār* in another verse.[38] He describes: (1) the services of many *aṭiyārs* with which the Lord sympathizes; (2) the song and dance of *Bhaktas* whom He loves; (3) the spiritual goal of those who follow His foot path, almost close on His heels, without swerving even by a hair's breadth, all of whom the Lord blesses with *Mukti* and *Siddhi*; (4) the hidden treasure of a Lord turning up to save the *'Nal aṭiyār'*—the good followers—in times of scarcity or danger; and (5) the desire of the mind of those *'Val aṭiyār'*, the undaunted followers, the desire being the very Lord Himself. The first is the description of those in the service of the Lord; the second, of those who sing His glories; the third, of those who reach the Lord with all their heart and mind, these three corresponding to the *'Toṇṭar'*, *'Pattar'*, and *'Aṉpar'* above referred to.

The fourth and the fifth descriptions introduce another distinction. The poet describes one class as *'Nal aṭiyār'* and the other as *'Val aṭiyār'*. To the one class, the Lord comes to its rescue as a hidden treasure. The other class possibly forms a hidden treasure to God Himself like *Kaṇṇappar* and other servants coming as it were to His rescue. The members of the latter class have no thought of themselves; they have no self of theirs; God moves them and all their acts are His. These are the towers of spiritual strength. But both of them are *aṭiyārs*. The path of the one seems to be tempting and easy for us to follow and they are the *'Nal*

34. *Tēṭṭaruntiṟal*, 2.
35. 7:2:3.
36. See *Vol. II*.
37. 7:39:10.
38. 7:67:2.

aṭiyār' like those in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*, who like *Nēca Nāyaṉār* and others come offering anything they can to the world at large, a pot, a cloth, or food without any suffering whatsoever. The other path seems to be beyond our reach. But in both the cases there is self surrender and God loves them all.

The epithets '*Nal*' and '*Val*' with reference to the *Aṭiyārs* are explained by the author of *Tirukkaḷiṟṟuppaṭiyār* as applying to their acts, '*nalviṉai*' and '*valviṉai*'. Whatever the action, the aim is the destruction of the separating self, 'I'; for, when that self is destroyed, Lord appears in Love. Therefore, both achieve the destruction of the selfish 'I'.

"*Melviṉaiyē yeṉṉa viyaṉulakil āṟṟariya*
Valviṉaiyē yeṉṉa varumiraṇṭum—Colliṟ
Civataṉma māmavaṟṟiṟ ceṉṟatilē celvāy
Pavakaṉmam nīṅkum paṭi".[39]

"The action or conduct of ours is of two kinds: the soft acts and the powerful or hard acts. Both are *Śivadharma*. For removing the *karma* which brings on birth, enter any of these".

"*Ātiyai arccittāṟku aṅkamum aṅkaṅkē*
Tītil tiṟampalavum ceyvaṉavum—Vētiyaṉē
Nalviṉaiyām eṉṟē namakkum eḷi tāṉavaṟṟai
Melviṉaiyē eṉṟatunām vēṟu".[40]

"The various steps of worshipping the Lord, who is the Beginning, the steps of the various blotless ways of our actions, that is, all these good actions which are easy for us—it is these we have mentioned separately as '*melviṉai*'." Here it is important to note that this author who first labelled these as '*melviṉai*' identifies them also with '*nalviṉai*' which we may, therefore, interpret as the actions of the '*Nal aṭiyār*' of *Ārūrar*. "The terrific acts like killing and cooking with their own hands for the *Bhairava* without any compunction are those which we have called '*valviṉai*':

"*Varaṅkaḷ tarumceyya vayiravarkkut taṅkaḷ*
Karaṅkaḷiṉāl aṉṟu kaṟiyākka—Iraṅkātē
Kolviṉaiyē ceyyum koṭuviṉaiyē āṉavaṟṟai
Valviṉaiyē eṉṟatunām maṟṟu".[41]

39. *V.*, 16.
40. *V.*, 17.
41. *V.*, 18.

The reference here is to *Ciruttoṇṭar.* The author refers further under this head of *'valvinai'* to *Saṇḍēśvara* and *Arivāḷ Tāya Nāyaṉār*[42] where all their acts are really acts of God and not of their lower selves which have become destroyed or transcended.

It is thus clear that what our poet has stated in *Tiruttoṇṭat-tokai* is asserted all through his *Tēvāram.* It is, therefore, nothing incredible in his having written that *hymn.* Has he not given us his vision of the whole universe as a *Gurukula* under the feet of the Great Master of the banyan tree and all the living beings becoming comrades in divine love and being saved by the Lord?[43] *Appālum aṭic cārntār* may be interpreted to include this vision as well.

This social aspect of this spiritual progress needs no special mention. Universal salvation is the goal of *Hinduism. Buddhism* has evolved its *Bōdhisattva* conception where the freed soul refuses to reach salvation before all the souls have attained it. This is the heroism of refusing salvation which according to *Cēkkiḻār* characterizes the *Bhaktas* of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* The *Purāṇa* speaks of the *Toṇṭars* reaching *Kailās.* According to *Appayya Dīkṣitar* when one individual attains freedom, he attains identity only with *Īśvara,* and not with *Brahmam,* with which he attains final identity only when all the souls or *jīvas* attain *Mōkṣa* or freedom, just like when a particular mirror is destroyed the reflection of the face becomes one with the reflecting face; becoming one with the face itself being possible only when all the mirrors are destroyed when alone there can be no further reflection. This may be the truth underlying the stories which assert that the saints reached *Kailās.*

III

THE TIRUTTOṆṬATTOKAI:

A new element has thus been introduced in this *Tiruttoṇṭat-tokai hymn,* that of communion with the loving souls hankering after God. These are called *'Toṇṭars',* that is, those in the service of God. This conception of *Toṇṭar* is considered by the *Śaivites* as another spiritual message of *Ārūrar.* The ideas of reverential feeling towards the *toṇṭars* is nothing new. *Periyāḻvār*

42. *vv.,* 19-20.
43. 7:65:6.

talks of the '*Toṇṭakkulam*',[44] thereby abolishing all castes and creating a family of all those who worship the Lord, to whatever caste or community they may belong. *Ārūrar* also refers to this great community.[45] The love for God reaches its highest point only when it becomes the love of the *Bhaktas* or *toṇṭar*, even to the neglect of God. The phrase '*Toṇṭaraṭippoṭi*'[46] is very significant, the dust on the feet of the *Bhaktas;* this is purer than the water of the *Ganges*—that is the conviction of *Kulaśēkharar*: "*Toṇṭaraṭippoṭi āṭa nām peṟil Gaṅgai nīr kuṭaintu āṭum vēṭkai eṉ āvatē*"?[47] Our saint *Ārūrar* goes a step further.

He creates a democracy of *Bhaktas*, a democracy for all times and climes. Though this is universal in its core, he has made it appear as a *Tamilian* democracy at the first sight. Man as he is constituted cannot grasp the full significance of the universal spirit. He is a speaking animal and it is this speech that creates his communal life. Our poet coming to sing in *Tamiḻ*, has naturally to appeal to the *Tamilian* at first. Therefore, he groups together the saints of *Tamiḻ* land and they represent the first vision of this spiritual democracy. The individual saints mentioned in his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* are all, saints born within the sacred precincts of the *Tamiḻ* country. This is not narrow parochialism; for, we soon find our poet hastening to make this democracy universal for all lands, for all times. He has only utilized the national awakening of the *Tamiḻ* country of his times to serve the religious cause. Even in his age, *Tamiḻ* land was not one political unit. The *Pāṇḍyas*, the *Cōḻas*, the *Cēras* and the *Pallavas* have made the *Tamiḻakam* their battle ground and our poet perhaps was himself a partisan of the *Pallavas*. He wants to escape from this scene of hatred and disunity, to a world of love and union. Fortunately, the *Tamiḻ* language and its culture offered one way of escape into this world of love. The common man understood this uniform culture of the *Tamiḻ* land. This democracy of *Bhaktas* emphasizes that way of the common man. The spirit of renunciation, the feeling of divine love, are possible for the poorest of the poor to whatever caste or community they may belong. Kings also come within this group of *Bhaktas* not as kings but as *Bhaktas* great for their spirit of

44. *Toṇṭakkulam Tiruppallāṇṭu, v.,* 5.
45. 7:72:11.
46. *Nālā. Prab., Tēṭṭaruntiṟal,* 2.
47. *Ibid.*

self-surrender and self-sacrifice. These great *Bhaktas* live for their great ideal laying down their very lives if necessary.

IV

SUGGESTIVE DESCRIPTION OF SAINTS:

The next important point that deserves our attention is the suggestive description of some of the saints given by our poet. He calls *'Iyaṟpakai'* as one who never says, 'No' — *"Illaiyē eṉṉāta Iyaṟpakai"*.[48] *'Meypporuḷ Nāyaṉār'* is described as one who is an adept in the path of success — *"Vellumā mikavalla Meypporuḷ"*.[49] This description gives the inward view and significance of the life message of this saint. *Meypporuḷ Nāyaṉār* breathed his last at the hands of a traitor who came in the form of an *Āgamic* scholar. This saint pleaded with the servant, *Tattaṉ*, in spite of the deceit to save the honoured form thus glorifying his own reverence for the sacred book through his own death. The victory is the victory of the Ideal. Again, *'Taṇṭi'* is described by our poet as one full of eyesight — *"Nāṭṭamiku Taṇṭi"*,[50] though according to the tradition he was blind. Our poet must be emphasizing the inner light and the ideal which guided *Taṇṭi*. Similarly *Kaṇṇappar*, the illiterate hunter saint, is described by our poet as the hero of all arts — *"Kalaimalinta cīr Nampi Kaṇṇappar"*.[51] The hunter saint was as it were the fruition of all arts, the divine love, and it is this, our poet must have had in his mind. In describing *'Amarnīti'*, our poet refers to his garland of *'mullai'* or jasmine — *"Allimeṉ mullaiyantār Amarnīti"*.[52] Usually it is a symbol of chastity. Probably our poet wants to emphasize that kind of relationship between *Amarnīti* and the Lord.

The poet describes some of the saints by the honoured title of *Nampi* perhaps looking upon them as divine princes. Some of them, *Appūti*[53] and *Naminanti*[54] are *Brahmins* and they might deserve the title of *Nampi* as already explained; so do the heroes

48. 7:39:1.
49. 7:39:1.
50. 7:39:5.
51. 7:39:2.
52. 7:39:1.
53. 7:39:4.
54. 7:39:4.

and ministers, *Kulaccirai*,[55] *Iṭaṅkaḻi*,[56] *Munaiyaṭuvār*[57] and *Kōṭpuli*.[58] But *there* are also others, who are not *Brahmins*. Therefore, our poet could not have had the castes in his mind when he described them as *Nampis*. *Kaṇṇappar* is called by him as '*Kalaimalinta cīr Nampi*'[59] and he is accepted by all as the prince among the *Bhaktas*. *Kaṇampullar* is one *Nampi* — "*Kaṇampulla Nampi*"[60] and his caste is not known. *Eripattar* is another *Nampi*.[61] *Kulacciraiyār*, the minister of the *Pāṇḍya* was responsible for bringing *Ñānacampantar* to *Maturai* for restoring *Śaivism* and he is, therefore, called "*Peru Nampi Kulaccirai*".[62] *Appūti* who exemplified the path of service, "*Tirunāvukkaracu vaḷar tiruttoṇṭin neri*"[63] is called "*Orunampi*"[64]—'The unique one'. *Naminanti* is called "*Arunampi*"[65] — *Aru* means rare. *Munaiyaṭuvār*[66] and *Kōṭpuli*[66a] are "*Vēlnampis*" like *Eripattar*,[67] the saints of heroism and valour. *Iṭaṅkaḻi* is called, "*Tār Nampi*",[68] *Tār* means garland, the prince who is considered to be a *Cōḻa*.

In some places our poet gives more than a passing reference to the glorious deeds of these saints — "*Vellumā mikavalla Meypporuḷ*";[69] "*Illaiyē ennāta Iyarpakai*";[70] "*Mummaiyāl ulakāṇṭa Mūrti*";[71] "*Umaipaṅkan kaḻalē maravātu kallerinta Cākkiyar*";[72] "*Kaitaṭinta varicilaiyān Kalikkampan*"[73] and "*Tennavanāy ulakāṇṭa Ceṅkaṇār*".[74] Usually our poet devotes one half of a line

55. 7:39:4.
56. 7:39:9.
57. 7:39:8.
58. 7:39:9.
59. 7:39:2.
60. 7:39:8.
61. 7:39:2.
62. 7:39:4.
63. *Periya. Pur., Ap. Pur.*, 1.
64. 7:39:4.
65. 7:39:4.
66. 7:39:8.
66a. 7:39:9.
67. 7:39:2.
68. 7:39:9.
69. 7:39:1.
70. 7:29:1.
71. 7:39:3.
72. 7:39:6.
73. 7:39:7.
74. 7:39:11.

in describing each one of the saints. He devotes more than half a line to *Kaṇampullar*.[75] But he devotes almost a full line to some of the saints: *viz., Tirunāvukkaracar*,[76] *Cākkiyar*,[77] *Neṭumāṟaṉ*,[78] *Vāyilāṉ*,[79] *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ*[80] and *Pukaḻttuṇai*.[81] He devotes a line and a half to *Caṇṭīcar*[82] and *Campantar*.[83] But to *Murukaṉ*,[84] *Uruttirapacupati*,[85] *Miḻalaikkuṟumpar*,[86] *Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār*, (*Pēyār*),[87] *Taṇṭi*,[88] *Mūrkkar*,[89] *Kāri*[90] *Maṅkayarkkaraci* (*Varivaḷaiyāḷ māṉi*)[91] and *Nēcaṉ*,[92] he devotes only one quarter of a line. He describes *Ñānacampantar* as our Lord (*Empirāṉ*) who pays no regard except to the feet of God adorned with the beautiful and sweet smelling *koṉṟai*.[93] *Tirumūlar* is also described as *Nampirāṉ*, our Lord.[93a] He speaks of *Tirunāvukkaracar* as one who had the straight path of Grace as his ideal path.[94] *Neṭumāṟaṉ* is said to have conquered the battle of *Nelvēli* because of the power of his mind so full of concentration on the Lord's feet.[95] *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* is referred to as the son of *Kāṭavarkōṉ* and the Lord of the world surrounded by the seas.[96] The verb used is '*kākkiṉṟa*' which is in the present tense suggesting that he is the contemporary of *Ārūrar*. The description implies that the *Pallava* king was the Lord of the seas.

75. 7:39:8.
76. 7:39:4.
77. 7:39:6.
78. 7:39:8.
79. 7:39:8.
80. 7:39:9.
81. 7:39:9.
82. 7:39:3.
83. 7:39:5.
84. 7:39:3.
85. 7:39:3.
86. 7:39:4.
87. 7:39:4.
88. 7:39:5.
89. 7:39:5.
90. 7:39:8.
91. 7:39:11.
92. 7:39:11.
93. 7:39:5.
93a. 7:39:5.
94. 7:39:4.
95. 7:39:8.
96. 7:39:9.

Some of the names themselves are suggestive of the greatness of the saints: *Viraṉmiṇṭar*,[97] *Eṟipattar*,[98] *Kaṇṇappar*,[99] *Meypporuḷ*,[100] *Iyaṟpakai*,[101] *Māṟaṉ*,[102] *Tirunāḷaippōvār*,[103] *Tirukkuṟipputtoṇṭar*,[104] *Cākkiyar*,[105] *Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār*,[106] *Śakti*[107] and *Kaṇampullar*.[108]

We have further discussed this significance of the various descriptions given by *Ārūrar*, in our study of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai hymn* in connection with the *hymns* giving us a life history of mysticism.[109]

V

ŚAIVISM, THE RELIGION OF SERVICE:

Aṭiyārs are the life of the *Bhakti* cult. From this point of view, *Śaivism* becomes a religion of service. It is this philosophy which has really worked the miracle, making *Śaivism* popular in South India. *Mysore Archaeological Report, 1925,* explains the consequences of this Philosophy of Service, after giving a short account of the life of each saint:

"Little or nothing is known of *Śaivism* and *Vaiṣṇavism* of *Southern India* before the advent of the *Jains* and the *Buddhists* in this part of the country. While *Brahmin* immigrants of *Southern India* seem to have given a *Vēdic* colour to those local cults and have mingled with the local people in the interests of their own culture, there is no doubt that the ambition of the *Jains* and the *Buddhists* was to root out the local cults and convert the people to their own faith. The most powerful means they employed for this end was '*Āhāra-abhaya-bhaishajya-śāstra-dāna*'—gift of food, protection, medicine and knowledge. Food, security, medicine and right knowledge! What more will man want than these? The temptation for the people to embrace *Jainism* or *Buddhism* was so

97. 7:39:1.
98. 7:39:2.
99. 7:39:2.
100. 7:39:1.
101. 7:39:1.
102. 7:39:8.
103. 7:39:3.
104. 7:39:3.
105. 7:39:6.
106. 7:39:6.
107. 7:39:7.
108. 7:39:8.
109. *Part I* of this *Volume*.

great that unless the *Śaivites* adopted the same policy, *Śaivism* was in imminent danger. That the *Śaivites* adopted the same policy that the *Jains* and *Buddhists* observed for spreading their own faith, is evident from the stories of Nos. 4, 31, 32, 34, 39, 41, 42, 52, 55, 58 and 59. That like the *Buddhists* and the early *Jains,* the *Śaivites* discarded caste distinction, if at all they had it, is clear from the stories of Nos. 32 and 42. It is also clear from stories of Nos. 2 and 35 that in the matter of pleasing a *Śaivite* guest neither wife nor life was too sacred to part with. So great was the honour shown to the *Śaivites* that even a thief and a murderer (Nos. 52 and 4) were honourably let off. It may be presumed that the rivalry in feeding the *Śaivite* poor gave room for no accumulation of wealth in a few hands, an economic evil for which no solution other than religious piety could be found. Even kings seem to have been afraid of abusing their wealth and of being indifferent to the claims of poverty. Immorality which is ever attendant upon selfishness seems to have had no wide scope owing to the altruistic spirit of *Śaivism*".[110]

The munificence of the patrons of *Śaivism* strengthened this philosophy of service and gave political importance to *Śaivism.* Some of these patrons are said to have amassed the wealth in whatever way they liked either in gambling or in war for offering their services to the *Śaivite Aṭiyārs.* It is this philosophy of love and service that had made *Śaivism* popular and powerful. Great *Vēdic* scholars and ritualists like *Sōmāsimāṟar, Rudrapaśupati,* great *Āgamic* scholars like *Śivakōsariyar,* learned men and poets like *Poyyaṭimai illāta pulavar* and *Kāri,* great kings like *Neṭumāṟaṉ, Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ,* great chieftains like *Ēyarkōṉ, Kōṭpuli* along with fishermen like *Atipattar,* untouchables like *Tirunāḷaippōvār* and *Tirunīlakaṇṭa yāḻppāṇar,* potters like *Tirunīlakaṇṭar,* washermen like *Tirukuṟipputtoṇṭar* and hunters like *Kaṇṇappar* became followers of this religion, making it thus a cosmopolitan one.

Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari speaks of all the *Nāyaṉmars* as mystics in the following passage:

"The devotees of *Śiva,* known as the sixty-three *toṇḍars* or servants of *Śiva,* belong to all ages and castes and form a spiritual democracy whose common quality was their deep *Śaivite* experience. Another feature common to all of them was their refuta-

110. *pp. 10-11.*

tion of *Buddhism* and *Jainism* which are said to be not only anti-*Śaivite* but anti-mystical. The lives of these saints are recorded in *Periyapurāṇam* by the saintly poet *Śekkizhar*. Among the best known of the saints is *Kaṇṇappar,* who was a hunter of the second century A.D. He nourished an image of *Śiva* every day with his own food consisting of flesh and finally risked his sight owing to his perfervid devotion to the Lord. Service to *Śaivite* saints was deemed superior even to that to *Śiva* Himself. The life of *Tiru-nīlakaṇṭa Nāyaṉār,* a potter of *Chidambaram,* is an example of such service. *Nanda* was an *Ādidrāviḍa* of *Ādaṉūr* near *Chidam-baram.* In his irrepressible longing to see *Śrī Naṭarāja,* he hastened to the shrine and is said to have disappeared in the shining ecstatic Presence. A devotee, who was by profession a washerman, dedicated himself to the service of *Śiva bhaktas* and washed their clothes in a spirit of service. *Buddhism* stressed the practice of love to all living beings, but denied the Supreme Being. A *Buddhist, Sākya Nāyaṉār,* gave up his creed and became a *Śaivite.* He gave a positive meaning to love and lived in that love which is *Śiva* Himself. *Śiva* is every man's God and is easily accessible to the devotee in any form desired by him. *Adipatta Nāyaṉār* was a fisherman by profession who lived near *Nāgapaṭ-ṭiṉam.* He gave one fish every day to *Śiva* in order, as he thought, to satisfy His hunger and finally offered himself to Him. *Kalia Nāyaṉār* was an oilmonger who became, by his *bhakti,* a *Śiva-*monger. *Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār* was a *Vaiśya* woman. She had visions of *Śiva,* the Inner Light in all lights, and saw Him with the spiritual eye of love. *Vāyilār Nāyaṉār* of Mylapore was, as his name implies, a silent seer of *Śiva* who built a shrine for Him in his inner life or spirit, lighted the lamp of self-illumination, and bathed Him in immortal bliss. *Pūsalār Nāyaṉār* was also given to this *mānasapūjā,* as he constructed a temple for the Lord spiritually and worshipped Him there. *Nēsa Nāyaṉār* was a weaver and a votary of *Śiva* who served the *bhaktas* by weaving cloths for them. In this way every *Nāyaṉār* spiritually sought God or *Śiva,* irrespective of birth or status and saw Him directly".[111]

This truth will be brought out in our study of *Paramaṉaiyē Pāṭuvār* whom we take to be mystic poets.

Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari speaks of *Nampi Ārūrar* (*Sundara-mūrti Svāmi*) as a mystic in the following passage :

111. *Mystics and Mysticism, pp.* 232-34.

"*Sundarar* or *Sundaramūrti Svāmi* was born as a *Brahmin* in South Arcot district in the 9th century *A.D.* His life is a typical instance of the Lord of Love seeking the sinner. The saint became infatuated with love to God who was Himself *pittā* or *pēraruḷāḷā* or Giver of Grace. He was once blessed with a vision of *Naṭarāja* dancing His cosmic dance in ecstasy in his heart. The joy felt by the saint was momentary and he yearned for reunion, and burst into the inspiring *hymns* of *Tēvāram*. His pilgrimage to different shrines was really a pilgrimage from worldliness to *Kailāsa*. He felt that even if *Śiva* forsook him, he would cling to Him and yearn for Him like the calf for the cow. He realized his utter nothingness and felt that he was His in every way. He calls the Lord the deliciousness in the fruit, the light in the eye, the melody in the song, and the healing balm to the *Śiva*-sick souls and infinite bliss. *Śiva* is in all beings as their indwelling mercy. He says that *Śiva* in His love for man accepts even insincere praise and prayer as sincere and deep devotion. God, to him, is the fount of Grace and He saves the sinner in spite of his sins. The purgative stage (*vairāgya*) of mysticism is graphically pictured in *Sundarar's Tēvāram* where he speaks of the transitory and trivial nature of sense-pleasures. The *jīva,* we are told, is entangled in the causality of *karma* and is caught up in the whirlpool of *samsāra* in which every pleasure ends in pain and earthly life is steeped in sin and sorrow and ill-health; birth and death follow each other in cyclic succession. Earthly life is unreal and the body turns to dust. Life is from dust and goes to dust.[112] Contrition is the only remedy for the sins of life and true repentance is based on firm faith in Śiva as the saviour of souls. Even punishment for sins is due to redemptive love, for *Śiva* is Sweetness and Love. Sense-pleasures are but partial expressions of Divine bliss. Suffering from the delusions of life and steeped in sensuality and sin and thinking of all the released saints that preceded him like *Appar* and *Sambandar,* he sought His feet and finally attained *mukti.* With devotion on account of love for love's sake, *Sundarar,* like *Tirumaṅgai Āzhvār,* sends messages of love to the Lord and finally the response comes and *Śiva* and the saint are united for ever in eternal bliss. *Sundarar* felt certain that there was no more birth or death for him".[113]

112. *Tēvāram,* 7:78:1.
113. *Mystics* and *Mysticism,* pp. 246-247.

CHAPTER III

TAMILIANS AND RELIGION

I

WORSHIP THROUGH POETRY :

We have seen so far that the groups of saints mentioned in the 10th verse of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* are not foreign to the ideas expressed by *Ārūrar* in his verses elsewhere. We have not discussed at length the conception of '*Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār*' and '*Appālum aṭiccārntār*'. '*Appālum aṭiccārntār*' is the universal vision of *Ārūrar* and we shall bring out the significance of this conception at the end of this part of our study. '*Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār*' as already hinted, are the mystic saints who have sung *Tēvāram* and we have suggested that *Ārūrar* is one of them. These have sung in *Tamiḻ* and these poets have looked upon *Tamiḻ* as the very form of the Lord. The later generations have considered these songs as the *Tamiḻ Vēdas* and the verses as *Tamiḻ mantras*. This theory of the *mantras* and poetry has to be here studied for our understanding the mystic poets. This will also explain why the saints of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* are all coming from the country where this *Tamiḻ* language is spoken. From this nationalism we proceed to the universalism of *Appālum aṭiccārntār*.[1] Certain problems relating to *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* are discussed as a preliminary to the study of the conception of *Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār*, in this chapter. In the last chapter of this part we discuss *Ārūrar's* toleration even with reference to his hostile sects of *Jains* and *Buddhists*.

II

NATIONALISM AND UNIVERSALISM :

The question when this *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* was sung by *Ārūrar* had to be raised by us at various places during our discussion of the lives of the saints included in that list. According to *Periyapurāṇam*, it was sung after the marriage with *Paravai*. This composition was due to the position taken by *Viṟaṉmiṇṭar* who con-

1. *Ch.*, 5.

cluded that even the Lord, that favoured one who did not honour the *Bhaktas* was to be blamed. *Ārūrar* was praying to God that he should be given the necessary capacity for singing the greatness of the *Bhaktas* and He answered his prayer by suggesting to him the first half of the first line of this *hymn*. In a few editions of *Periyapurāṇam*, some additional verses are found in this connection where it is stated that *Ārūrar* coming from the house of *Paravai* in his libertine form went straight to worship the Lord, whereupon *Viṟaṉmiṇṭar* condemned *Ārūrar* who was, therefore, overcome by grief and who could not find the Lord inside the temple, but afterwards, the Lord advised him to sing this *hymn*. The *Sanskrit* and *Kannada* traditions, as already noted often refer to this libertine form and the *Telugu Basava Purāṇa* by *Sōmanātha* refers to this incident in these very terms. This trend in such descriptions is found in some mediaeval pseudo *Siddha* works which in exaggerating the intrinsic purity of *jīvanmuktas* assert that they as *svēcchācārins* may be appearing for all outward purposes as libertines—almost suggesting that they may be consciously so. In their enthusiasm for reform and revolt these assertions are made which may suggest that they are heretics—not bound by ordinary laws of conduct reminding us of the western Anti-nomian doctrine and practices where harlotry and other carnal vices are not considered sinful for the spiritual man because the spirit in him which is God is not affected by the flesh and cannot sin and because the man who is nothing cannot sin so long as the spirit which is God is in him. This cannot be the correct view. But as most of the editions of *Periyapurāṇam* do not contain these seventeen verses they must be taken to be interpolations based on the *Telugu* and *Kannada* traditions. *Ārūrar* teaches us that there is a God who transcends nature, that *Dharma* governs all men, that there is sin and that the acts of libertines are impurities leading to Hell, for there is suffering and enjoyment, not only in this life, but also in our after life; when the *jīvanmukta* transcends ordinary morality, he reaches the stage of perfect goodness which is beyond our conceptions of good and evil; it is supra moral and not immoral.

III

SAINTS GREAT, NOT BY MIRACLES ALONE:

But this is not the problem facing us. We found that the saints who ought to be taken as contemporaries of *Ārūrar* came to

be known to *Ārūrar* only after this *hymn* was sung. *Kōṭpuli, Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār* and *Ēyarkōṉ* may be mentioned in this connection. Especially with reference to *Ēyarkoṉ,* the miraculous events took place long after this *Tiruttoṇṭattokai hymn* was sung. It may be contended that it is not the miracles but their greatness in the *Śaivite* world that appealed to *Ārūrar* and that these saints were famous even at the time of the marriage with *Paravai.*

IV

ARE ALL THE SAINTS OF TIRUTTOṆṬATTOKAI, CONTEMPORARIES?

Another problem arises on account of the statements made in *Periyapurāṇam.* While *Ārūrar* was coming to *Tiruvārūr* temple, he saw all the followers of *Śiva* of this world assembled within the grove—*Tēvāciriyaṉ.*[2] "When is the Lord to make me their slave?" —so prayed *Ārūrar* and the Lord explained to him the greatness of these saints and asked him to take refuge in them.[3] He saw the great assembly at a distance and worshipped them many a time and began singing the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* repeating the name of every one of these saints.[4] This description in *Periyapurāṇam* suggests that all the saints mentioned in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* were physically present on the occasion of its composition. This will make all of them contemporaries.

But it would be impossible for the 3,000 *Brahmins* of *Tillai* to have assembled there along with the other saints. It may be suggested that a few of their representatives were present in the grove (*Tēvāciriyaṉ*). We had already pointed out that *Caṇḍēśvara* and *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* seemed to have become traditions by the time of this *hymn.* It may be contended in answer to this argument that there was a confusion in the mind of the people, a confusion which led to the identification of a later *Caṇḍēśvara* and *Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ* with their namesakes of a more ancient period. Even if there was any such confusion, it could have been only because these two saints were not contemporaries of the three *Tēvāram* poets.

Whether all these saints were contemporaries or not, one conclusion is clear that *Nampiyāṇṭār* and *Cēkkiḻār,* if not *Nampiyārūrar* looked upon them as forming one group. In the '*Appālum*

2. *Taṭut.,* 189.
3. *Ibid.,* 196.
4. *Ibid.* 201.

aṭiccārntār' purāṇam, Cēkkiḻār distinguishes this group of saints from all other groups living before or after this group. If all of them are not contemporaries they must be taken to have lived in one particular period, probably the 6th and 7th centuries of the *Christian Era* responsible for the restoration of *Śaivism* to its old glory. This conclusion seems to be irresistible as these saints lived in the memories of the people of *Ārūrar's* age.

V

ŚAIVA SAṄGHA:

In this connection, the traditions about the *Jain Saṅgha*, the *Buddhist Saṅgha* and the great *Tamiḻ Saṅgha* come to our mind. The name *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* is also very suggestive. *'Tokai'* has been used by *Campantar* himself as the name of *Tamiḻ Caṅkam*—*"Aṟṟaṉṟi antaṇ Maturait tokai yākkiṉāṉum"*.[5] Then, *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* will mean this *Śaiva Saṅgha* or the assembly of *Śaiva* followers or saints. Perhaps one such assembly existed at *Tiruvārūr*.

The name *Tēvāciriyaṉ* for the grove or the *maṇṭapa* of the saints is also significant. *Tēvāciriyaṉ* means a divine teacher; a fitting name for the place where these teachers of *Śaivism* assembled from generation to generation up to the time of *Nampiyārūrar*. Probably *Viṟaṉmiṇṭar* was the latest of the leaders of this assembly. Or, *Tēvāciriyaṉ* may mean the *Ācāryas* or teachers who had attained divinity as *jīvanmuktas* or *vidēhamuktas*. In any case, it is clear from the reference in *Periyapurāṇam* that this group forms a unique one, separated from others as belonging to a particular period of time and a particular place. This line of argument may lead one to conclude that all these saints could not have been removed from each other by any great length of time perhaps more than a century.

VI

AGE OF TAMIḺ REVIVAL:

It is in this connection the fact that all these saints belong to *Tamiḻ* country becomes important. The *Pallava* period was a great age of *Sanskrit* revival in the *Tamiḻ* country. But that is only one half of the story. The saints like *Ārūrar* have been successfully attempting at *Tamilising* the people, the kings, and their tradition. The great transformation effected by *Ārūrar* in his treatment of

5. 5:54:11.

Purāṇic stories had already been studied in detail.[6] The kings themselves trying to identify themselves with *Tamiḻ* by assuming *Tamiḻ* titles and assimilating the *Tamiḻ* tradition with their history had been already pointed out. It is in this light that we have to study *Ārūrar's* poems.

VII

VISION OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD IN TIRUTTOṆṬATTOKAI:

A study of the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai hymn*[7] is very interesting. The *hymn* begins with the *Brahmin* saints of *Citamparam,* who, along with the *Naṭarāja* temple there, should have become so prominent as to occupy the first place during the age of *Ārūrar*. The next name mentioned is the saint from a community of potters. This juxtaposition of a potter with the *Brahmins* shows that the poet is going beyond caste-ridden society to give us a vision of the universal brother-hood — the *Toṇṭakkulam* of *Periyāḻvār*.[8] The following table will show the caste-war distribution of the saints of this *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*. Every one of the innumerable castes of South India could feel honoured by their contribution of at least one saint to the growth of this brotherhood.

Tillaivāḻ Antaṇar	*Brahmins*
Tirunīlakaṇṭar	Potter
Iyaṟpakai	Merchant
Iḷaiyāṉkuṭi Māṟar	*Vēḷāḷa*
Meypporuḷ	King
Viṟaṉmiṇṭar	*Vēḷāḷa*
Amarnīti	Merchant
Eṟipattar	Warrior?
Ēṉātināthar	*Īḻa*
Kaṇṇappar	*Vēṭar* (Hunter)
Kuṅkiliyakkalayar	*Brahmin*
Māṉakkañcāṟar	*Vēḷāḷa*
Arivāṭṭāyar	*Vēḷāḷa*
Āṉāyar	*Āyar* (Cowherd)
Mūrti	Merchant
Muruka	*Brahmin*
Uruttirapacupati	*Brahmin*
Tirunāḷaippōvār	*Pulaiyar*
Tirukkuṟipputtoṇṭar	Washerman
Caṇṭīcar	*Brahmin*
Tirunāvukkaracar	*Vēḷāḷa*

6. *Vol.,* II.
7. 7:39.
8. *Tiruppallāṇṭu*, *v.*, 5.

Kulacciraiyār	?
Perumilalaikkurumpar	King?
Pēyār (Kāraikkālammaiyār)	Merchant
Appūti	*Brahmin*
Nīlanakkar	*Brahmin*
Naminanti	*Brahmin*
Campantar	*Brahmin*
Ēyarkōnkalikkāma	*Vēḷāḷa*
Tirumūlar	*Yōgin* (Cowherd?)
Tanti	?
Mūrkka	*Vēḷāḷa*
Cōmācimārar	*Brahmin*
Cākkiyar	*Vēḷāḷa*
Cirappuli	*Brahmin*
Ciruttoṇṭar	*Māmātiraiyar?*
Kalarirrarivār	King
Kaṇanātar	*Brahmin*
Kūrruva	King
Poyyaṭimai Illār	Scholar?
Pukalccōlar	King
Naraciṅkamunaiyaraiyar	King
Atipattar	Fisherman
Kalikkampar	Merchant
Kaliyar	*Cekkār* (Oilmonger)
Cakti	*Vēḷāḷa*
Aiyaṭikaḷkāṭavarkōn	King
Kaṇampullar	?
Kāri	Scholar?
Ninracīrneṭumārar	King
Vāyilār	*Vēḷāḷa*
Munaiyaṭuvār	*Vēḷāḷa*
Kalarciṅkar	King
Iṭaṅkali	*Vēḷāḷa*
Ceruttuṇai	*Vēḷāḷa*
Pukalttuṇai	*Brahmin* (*Ādiśaivar*)
Kōṭpuli	*Vēḷāḷa*
Pattarāiyppaṇivār	?
Paramanaiyē Pāṭuvār	?
Cittattaiccivanpālēvaippār	*Yōgin?*
Tiruvārūrp pirantār	?
Muppōtum Tirumēni Tīṇṭuvār	*Brahmins*
Mulunīrupūciya Munivar	?
Appālum aṭiccārntār	?
Pūcalār	*Brahmin*
Maṅkaiyarkkaraci	Queen
Nēca	*Cāliyar* (Weaver)
Kōcceṅkatcōla	King
Tirunīlakaṇṭayālppāṇar	*Pāṇar*
Caṭaiyar	*Brahmin*
Icaiñāniyār	*Brahmin*
Nampi Ārūrar	*Brahmin*

VIII

THE TIRUTTOṈṬATTOKAI SAINTS AND THE TAMILNĀD:

This fact of these saints of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* being *Tamilians* has not been sufficiently emphasized till now. *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* was sung in the temples and we have specific reference to an inscription of *Rājēndra Cōḻa*.[9] *Nampiyāṇṭār Nampi* has sung a separate verse for each one of these *bhaktas* and *Cēkkiḻār's Periyapurāṇam* gives the stories of these *toṇṭars* with all epic grandeur. His *Purāṇam*, therefore, has become in a way the national epic of the *Tamiḻ Land*. The incidents themselves are of no immense significance. It is the spirit that actuated the *bhaktas* that is really divine. Therefore, these stories have a psychological significance tracing the spiritual development of these *bhaktas*. The following table giving the places of birth of these *bhaktas* shows that all of them belong to the *Tamiḻ* land.

Name	Country	Village
Tillaivāḻ Antaṇar	*Cōḻa*	*Tillai-Citamparam*
Tirunīlakaṇṭar	do.	do.
Iyaṟpakai	do.	*Pukār*
Māṟa	do.	*Iḷaiyāṉkuṭippati*
Viṟaṉ miṇṭar	*Cōḻa*	*Ceṅkuṉṟam*
Meypporuḷ	*Cēti*	*Tirukkōvalūr*
Amarnīti	*Cōḻa*	*Paḻaiyāṟai*
Eṟipattar	do.	*Karuvūr*
Ēṉātinātar	do.	*Eyiṉaṉūr*
Kaṇṇappar	*Toṇṭai*	*Tirukkāḷatti*
Kuṅkiliyakkalayar	*Cōḻa*	*Tirukkaṭavūr*
Māṉakkañcāṟar	—	*Kañcāṟūr*
Arivāṭṭāyar	*Cōḻa*	*Kaṇamaṅkalam*
Āṉāyar	*Mēlmānāṭu*	*Maṅkalam*
Mūrti	*Pāṇṭi*	*Maturai*
Muruka	*Cōḻa*	*Tiruppukalūr*
Uruttirappacupati	do.	*Tiruttalaiyūr*
Tirunāḷaippōvār	*Mēṟkānāṭu*	*Ātaṉūr*
Tirukkuṟipputtoṇṭar	*Toṇṭai*	*Kāñcīpuram*
Caṇṭīcar	*Cōḻa*	*Tiruccēyñalūr*
Tirunāvukkaracar	*Tirumuṉaippāṭi*	*Tiruvāmūr*
Kulacciṟaiyār	*Pāṇṭi*	*Maṉamēṟkuṭi*
Perumiḻalaikkuṟumpar	*Miḻalai*	*Tirumilalai*
Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār	*Cōḻa*	*Kāraikkāl*
Appūti	do.	*Tiṅkaḷūr*

9. *S.I.I., Vol. IV, No.* 223.

Name	Country	Village
Nīlanakkar	do.	*Cāttamaṅkai*
Naminanti	do.	*Ēmappērūr*
Campantar	do.	*Cīkāḻi*
Ēyarkōṉkalikkāma	do.	*Perumaṅkalam*
Tirumūlar	do.	*Cāttaṉūr*
Taṇṭi	do.	*Tiruvārūr*
Mūrkka	*Toṇṭai*	*Tiruvēṟkāṭu*
Cōmācimāṟar	*Cōḻa*	*Tiruvampar*
Cākkiyar	?	*Caṅkamaṅkai*
Ciṟappuli	*Cōḻa*	*Ākkūr*
Ciṟuttoṇṭar	do.	*Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi*
Kaḻaṟiṟṟaṟivār	*Malaināṭu*	*Makōtai*
Kaṇanātar	*Cōḻa*	*Cīkāḻi*
Kūṟṟuva	—	*Kaḷantai*
Poyyaṭimai Illār	*Pāṇṭi*	*Maturai*
Pukaḻccōḻar	*Cōḻa*	*Uṟaiyūr*
Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyar	*Tirumuṉaippāṭi*	*Tirumuṉaippāṭi*
Atipattar	*Cōḻa*	*Nākappaṭṭiṉam*
Kalikkampar	—	*Peṇṇākaṭam*
Kaliyar	*Toṇṭai*	*Tiruvoṟṟiyūr*
Cakti	*Cōḻa*	*Variñcaiyūr*
Aiyaṭikaḷkāṭavarkōṉ	*Toṇṭai*	*Kāñcipuram*
Kaṇampullar	—	*Irukkuvēḷūr*
Kāri	*Cōḻa*	*Tirukkaṭavūr*
Niṉṟacīrneṭumāṟar	*Pāṇṭi*	*Maturai*
Vāyilār	*Toṇṭai*	*Mayilāppūr*
Muṉaiyaṭuvār	*Cōḻa*	*Nīṭūr*
Kaḻaṟciṅkar	*Toṇṭai*	—
Iṭaṅkaḻi	*Kōṉāṭu*	*Koṭumpāḷūr*
Ceruttuṇaiyār	*Cōḻa*	*Tañcai*
Pukaḻttuṇai	—	*Ceruviliputtūr*
Kōṭpuli	—	*Nāṭṭiyattāṉkuṭi*
Pattarāippaṇivār		
Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār		
Cittattaic civaṉpālē vaippār		
Tiruvārūrppiṟantār	*Cōḻa*	*Tiruvārūr*
Muppōtum tirumēṉi tīṇṭuvār		
Muḻunīṟupūciya muṉivar		
Appālum aṭiccārntār		
Pūcalār	—	*Niṉṟavūr*
Maṅkaiyarkkaraci	*Pāṇṭi*	*Maturai*
Nēca	—	*Kampili*
Kōcceṅkaṭ Cōḻa	*Cōḻa*	—
Tirunīlakaṇṭa yāḻppāṇar		*Erukkattampuliyūr*
Caṭaiyaṉār	*Tirumuṉaippāṭi*	*Tirunāvalūr*
Icaiñāṉiyār	do	do.
Nampi Ārūraṟ	do	do.

Our poet refers to the native places of some of the Saints:

Māṟaṉ	*Iḷaiyāṉkuṭi*
Viṟaṉmiṇṭar	*Kuṉṟai*
Kalayaṉ	*Kaṭavūr*
Kañcāṟaṉ	*Kañcāṟu*
Āṉāyar	*Puṉalmaṅkai*
Perumiḻalaikkuṟumpar	*Perumiḻalai*
Nīlanakkar	*Cāttamaṅkai*
Cōmācimāṟar	*Ampar*
Ciṟuttoṇṭar	*Ceṅkāṭṭaṅkuṭi*
Kaṉanātar	*Kāḻi*
Kūṟṟuva	*Kaḷantai*
Pukaḻccōḻa	*Karuvūr*
Atipattar	*Nākai*
Cakti	*Variñcai*
Niṉṟacīrneṭumāṟa	*Nelvēliveṉṟār*
Vāyilār	*Mayilai*
Ceruttuṇai	*Tañcai*
Pūcalār	*Niṉṟavūr*

IX

KAMPILI IN TAMILNĀD:

There are two saints who may appear to be an exception to the generalization that all the saints of the *hymn* are from the *Tamiḻ* land. The one is *Tirumūlar.* The later day tradition states that he came from the Northern country. *Ārūrar* is silent about this. But even according to the later day tradition, the saint entered the body of a *Tamilian* cowherd and, therefore, he is no exception to our generalization.

The other saint is *Nēca Nāyaṉār.* But we will be finding '*Kampili*' as the birth place of *Nēca Nāyaṉār.* This city lies on the bank of *Tuṅgabhadra.* This, therefore, gives us a clue to the conception of *Tamiḻ* land of the time of the *Smṛtis.* The *Smṛtis* speak of *Kṛṣṇā* as the *Southern* boundary of the *Andhras* and, therefore, there is no wonder in *Nampi Ārūrar* thinking of all lands south of *Tuṅgabhadra* forming part of the *Tamiḻ* country and the attempts, of the *Pallavas* and the later *Cōḻas,* were aimed at reaching that northern border. It is unfortunate that when discussing the limits of the *Tamiḻ* country this aspect of the question is often forgotten. The *Pallavas* had their northern capital at *Dāṉyakaṭaka* and *Kulōttuṅka* the Great, came from the *Vēṅki* country. Therefore, in their times, it was but natural, that the *Tamiḻ*

country should have been thought as reaching *Tuṅgabhadra,* if not *Kṛṣṇā*. *Kampili* is not given as the city of *Nēca Nāyaṉār* by *Ārūrar* himself. The city is, however, mentioned by *Appar* as an important holy place containing a *Śiva* temple.

X

SAINTS OUTSIDE TAMILNĀD:

It is significant that in this list of *Toṇṭars, Nampi Ārūrar* does not mention *Mārkkaṇṭar, Paracurāmar, Cūtar, Pārtha* and *Bhagīratha,* whom in other places he had mentioned with the feeling of great reverence. In the light of our statement about the birth place of *Bhaktas* included in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* the reason for the non-inclusion is very clear.

In the following *hymns,* he refers to some of the saints found in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* along with *Mārkkaṇṭar, Cūtar, Paracurāmar, Pārtha, Bhagīratha,* etc. Therefore, *Nampi Ārūrar* had no objection to combine these sets of saints. Only the scheme of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* as giving a list of saints of *Tamiḻ* land prevents *Nampi Ārūrar* in including the names of these saints whom *Nampi Ārūrar* had confessed had inspired him to take refuge in the Lord.

Pukaḻttuṇai Nāyaṉār	7:9:6; 7:19:11
Taṇṭi (Caṇḍēśvara)	7:17:4; 7:55:3
Caṇṭi, Tirunāvukkaraiyar & *Kaṇṇappar*	7:65:2
Caṇṭi & *Kaṇṇappar*	7:88:6
Ñāṉacampantar	7:62:8
Ñāṉacampantar & *Nāviṉukkaracar*	7:67:5; 7:78:10
Ñāṉacampantar, Nāviṉukkaraiyaṉ Nāḷaippōvāṉ, Cūtaṉ, Cākkiyaṉ, Cilanti, Kaṇṇappaṉ, and *Kaṇampullaṉ*	7:55:4
Pārttaṉ & *Pakīrataṉ*	7:55:7
Kōcceṅkaṇāṉ	7:65:1
Vicayaṉ	7:66:4; 7:53:8; 7:57:6
Caṇṭi, Tirnāvukkaraiyaṉ & *Kaṇṇappaṉ*	7:65:2
Taṇṭi & *Ēyarkōṉ*	7:55:3
Antaṇāḷaṉ (Mārkkaṇṭaṉ)	7:55:1
Muṉivar (Mārkkaṇṭaṉ)	7:63:4
Pārttaṉār	7:56:2; 7:76:3
Paracurāmaṉ	7:65:3
Piṭavūrāṉ	7:96:6
Naraciṅkamuṉaiyaraiyaṉ	7:17:11
Curapi (Surabhi)	7:65:4

XI

TAMIḺ COUNTRY DEAR TO ŚIVA:

Ārūrar feels that the *Tamiḻ* country is dear to *Śiva*. The later day poets had emphasized this greatness of *Tamiḻ* land by associating with *Naṭarāja* and *Dakṣiṇāmurti* who are always turning to the south, that is according to them to the southern parts of the *Tamiḻ* country. *Ārūrar* is very definite about *Śiva* favouring the *Tamiḻ* or the south country: "*Teṉṉāṉaik kuṭapāliṉ vaṭapāliṉ kuṇapāl cērāta cintaiyāṉ*"[10] — 'He is the Lord of the south and his mind never turns to the west or the north or the east'. Our poet feels that *Śiva* is behind the *Tamilians* and their rulers. "*Niṟaikkoṇṭa cintaiyāl Nelvēli veṉṟa Niṉṟacīr Neṭumāṟaṉ*"[11] refers to the victory of the *Pāṇṭiya* because *Ārūrar* probably feels that it was a victory brought out by *Śiva's* blessing on the king, a victory for the *Tamilians* as against the foreigners who threatened the freedom of the *Tamiḻ* country. It is in this light we have to understand *Ārūrar's* reference to *Pallavas* — "*Pallavarkkut tiṟaikoṭā maṉṉavarai maṟukkam ceyyum....Perumāṉ*"[12] and his joy in referring to *Kaḻaṟciṅkaṉ* as "*Kaṭal cūḻnta ulakelām kākkiṉṟa perumāṉ*".[13] Perhaps we have to interpret with reference to various chieftains and kings in his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* as so many references to the great men who saved the *Tamiḻ* country of *Śaivism*. "*Kūṭāmaṉṉaraik kūṭṭattu veṉṟa Kōṭpuli*"[14] and such other references are significant from this point of view. It is, therefore, no wonder that he has grouped together the *Śaivite* saints of *Tamiḻ* land fresh in the memory of his age as something unique in his *Tiruttoṇṭattokai.* It is in this light that we must read the blissful references to the various places, rivers and mountains of *Tamiḻ* land occurring in his *hymn,* descriptions which probably showed the way to the later day poets singing *Nāṭṭuppaṭalam, Nakarappaṭalam* and *Āṟṟuppaṭalam.* Therefore, his descriptions of nature of *Tamiḻ* land is important from this point of view apart from its supreme poetic worth. *Ārūrar's* conception of *Tamiḻ* as the very form of God may be discussed in relation to the theory of *Mantra* and Poetry and generally of Art.

10. 7:38:8.
11. 7:39:8.
12. 7:90:4.
13. 7:39:9.
14. 7:15:10.

CHAPTER IV

TAMIL AND RELIGION

I

THE UNIVERSE: THE ŚABDAPRAPAÑCA AND THE ARTHA-PRAPAÑCA:

The *Āgamas* speak *of mantras*. According to the *Āgamas* and *Tantras,* the *Śabda Brahman* is in the form of the *Kuṇḍalini Śakti* in the *Mūlādhāra.* The *Parā Vāk* resides there. This develops into *mātrikas* which *Woodroffe* translates as 'Little mothers', the subtle forms of the gross letters (*Varṇa*). The letters represent certain subtle creative forces. The garland of bones is explained as this garland of subtle letters (*Varṇamālā*). The *varṇas* (letters) make up the *padas* (words) and *vākyas* (sentences) which are the three of the six *adhvās* or ways of reaching *Śakti,* if they are experienced as pure forms of *Citśakti* (*Adhva śōdhana*). The *Parā* sound in the *Mūlādhāra* becomes the *paśyantī* (*śabda* of general movement) at the *Maṇipūraka* where it is connected with the mind. At *Anāhata* or heart, it becomes *Madhyama* associated with *Buddhitattva.* The breath coming out through the throat and mouth gives us the final gross sound — *Vaikharī* — as heard by our ear. The *mantras* are combinations of the *mātrikas,* the very forms of the God worshipped.

The whole Universe is divided into the *Śabda prapañca,* the world of words and the *Artha prapañca,* the world of matter. When *Śiva* so desires, the creation starts. A stress is formed in the *Matrix* or *Māyā* in the *citākāśa.* Vibrations mean some sound or other, heard or unheard, considering them independent of the effect it produces in its causal aspect. *Śabda* is any kind of motion, physical or mental, for one cosmic movement produces both the mind and its object which two may be termed the name or *śabda* on the one hand; form or object on the other hand. The varieties of forms in this Universe are due to a variety of vibrations. Therefore, every particular thing or form in the world has its own peculiar vibration and, therefore, a peculiar and innate sound of its own. This sound represents its proper name. Its physical form represents its matter. This proper name or its innate sound

or *mantra* is heard only by *yōgis* and *ṛṣis* whose spiritual development gives them the capacity to realize and hear that *mantra* or proper name and the music of the spheres. All the other names in current usage are but the corruptions of these proper names; and sound can revivify even these corruptions. In this theory, the word or name is as important as the thing itself. The word gives us the control over the thing. The word as vibrations represents the very energy or the *śakti* of the thing. The whole Universe as representing the names and forms is the display of the divine dance of the Lord, a concrete externalization of His Grace. The *Āgamas* speak of the word of the energy form and the material form as the indivisible divine pair of *Śiva* and *Pārvatī*, our divine parents. *Kāḷidāsa*, in his famous epic *Raghuvamsa*, in his opening invocation to *Śiva* and *Pārvatī* indissolubly united as *Vāk* and *Artha*, gives expression to this great *Āgamic* truth.

Nampi Ārūrar also refers to these two kinds of Universe, of words and matter. The *Vēdas*, as the embodiment of great truth, reveal themselves through these two forms. The inner truth of these two forms is realized by those who have attained realization at the feet of the Lord. The various arts and philosophies are in essence the display of these two kinds of Universe and in that sense the incarnation of the Lord. The great dance of *Śiva* reveals itself in the various forms of this Universe. *Nampi Ārūrar* also speaks in terms of words and matter: "*Collai Nampi Poruḷāy niṉṟa Nampi*"—'O, Prince! You are the words; You are the Prince standing firm as the significance of the words or the things of the word';[1] "*Coṟporuḷāyc curuṅkā maṟai nāṉkiṉaiyum ōtiyaṉ*"[2] 'You have become the words and things expounded in the expanding four *Vēdas*. (This may also be interpreted to mean that the *Vēdas* are in the form of words and things). "The loving *Brahmins* of *Naṟaiyūr* realize completely the significance of words and things"—"*Puriyum maṟaiyōr niṟaicoṟ poruḷkaḷ teriyum Naṟaiyūr*";[3] "*Colluvār coṟporuḷavai nī*"[4] — 'You are the words and the matter spoken of'; "*Coṟpāla poruṭpāla curuti oru nāṉkum tōttiramum palacollit tutittiṟaitaṉ tiṟattē kaṟpārum kēṭpārumāy eṅkum naṉkār kalaipayil antaṇar vāḻum Kalayanallūr kāṇē*"[5]—

1. 7:63:8.
2. 7:97:1.
3. 7:93:8.
4. 7:4:7.
5. 7:16:5.

'The *Brahmins* living in *Kalayanallūr* learn the various excellent arts everywhere, they learn and they listen to the various aspects of the Lord, praising Him and reciting various *hymns* and the four *Vēdas* of words and matter'.

II

THE INNER MEANING OF REAL EDUCATION:

Nampi Ārūrar here explains the inner meaning of real education. The *hymns* as contrasted with the *Vēdas* probably refer to the *Tamiḻ hymns.* The spoken sound or speech is a manifestation of the naming or thought which is similar in all races of men. It is mental operation; it can be so intensified as to itself, be creative when the words born of them in the minds and mouths of the saints become divine (*mantra caitanya*). It becomes the art of divine poetry or divine music. Here, art becomes worship capable of creating the *mantra caitanya*—*"Arccaṉai pāṭṭē ākum"*.[6] Art is here related to the divine experience. And the *Tamiḻ hymns,* if our interpretation is correct express equally with the *Vēdas* the wide expanse of word and matter. The inward nature of art is further emphasized by *Nampi Ārūrar*—*"Kalaikkelām Poruḷāy utaṉ kūṭip pārkkiṉṟa uyirkkup parintāṉ"*[7]—'He is the very meaning of all the arts; He becomes one with the soul and He is all love to the soul which sees and learns'. The experience of art and life takes place within the frame-work of time, though in itself it is beyond time; and this miracle is due to the fact that God Himself is day and night measuring time—*"Pakalum kaṅkulum āki niṉṟāṉ"*.[8] But these experiences are made possible through the sense organs. These sense organs are but matter whilst the experience realized is divine. This is indeed a miracle and it is made possible because these sense organs are but the forms of God. "He is the tasting tongue, the discriminating ear and the seeing eye and is the very taste experienced by all these and also the objects of these sensations, the roaming seas and mountains. It is all the work of His Grace. He is the rain that pours down from the top of the dark mountain".[9] *Nampi Ārūrar* thus explains the experience of art as the experience of God. The same

6. *Periyapurāṇam, Tatut.,* 70.
7. 7:59:3.
8. 7:59:3.
9. 7:50:3.

idea is emphasized in another place—"*Colluvār corporuḷavai nī eṉpaṉ nāṉ, nākkum ceviyum kaṇṇum nī eṉpaṉ nāṉ*".[10]

The theory underlying this conception of words and their meaning is hinted at by *Appar* in *Kīḻvēḷūr Tiruttāṇṭakam*: "*Coṟpāvum poruḷ terintu tūymai nōkkit tūṅkātār maṉattiruḷai vāṅkātāṉ*"[11]—'The word as sounds spread; through them the meaning is learnt; the pure (*Tūymai* is defined as the state of being without any desire or hankering. This '*tūymai*' is said to arise when the Truth is contemplated on and according to *Tiruvaḷḷuvar*, "*Tūuymai eṉpatu avā iṉmai maṟṟatu vāaymai vēṇṭa varum*"—*Tirukkuṟaḷ*, 368) is seen and realized. There is then the calm of a sleep, a *samādhi* or mystic experience of calm bliss where the ego is completely lost. From the mind of such, the darkness is withdrawn. That is how the Lord arranges these things'. The words (poetry) seem to have an incantation value. The conscious and unconscious become one and are transcended in the *supra* conscious when the darkness and dim vision disappear giving place for the clear mystic vision.

The truth is not a matter of propositions of dry logic and conflicting philosophies; as the real, it has to be experienced and realized. The distinction which the Catholics make between *Animus* and *Anima* is important as suggesting real value of poetry as *anima* or mystic realization of the Absolute as a finer kind of music as Socrates puts it, as distinguished from *animus* the logical understanding of the philosophical abstraction; *animus* is said to function in the sphere of clear abstract reasoning and *anima* in deeper and richer field of knowledge or rather intuitional awareness as for instance our poet.

III

OUR POET'S PHILOSOPHY OF ART:

We had suggested in our study of the *hymn* on *Ōṇakāntaṉ taḷi*[12] that our poet was giving his philosophy of Art or '*Kalai*' in one of the verses therein.[12a] We have interpreted that verse as referring to the six passions of man: *Kāma, Krōdha, Lōbha,*

10. 7:4:7.
11. *Ap.*, 281:2.
12. 7:5.
12a. 7:5:8.

Mada, Mōha, and *Mātsara.* They are referred to as having been established in the scheme of the Universe for *'Kalai'* or Art. These are the most powerful emotions and when they are sublimated they become poetic sentiments, *rasas* or *'cuvai'* or *'meyppāṭu'* which are said to form the very life of poetry or art. Art according to *Aristotle's theory of Catharsis* or purging[13] evokes these emotions but in such a way that the artist and critic become masters of these emotions rather than their slaves, with the result that their minds remain purified, being purged of all the riotous effects of these emotions. At the end there is a calmness or peace which is after all the real bliss. It is this sublimation of the passions which our poet speaks of as *'Ulaiyamaittal'*,[14] *i.e.*, preparing for their enjoyment even as the cook prepares for the feast of rice by starting the oven. The fire of the oven here reminds us of the *tapas* involved in the creation of art—the *tapas* which transforms these diabolical emotions into divine art. Art was looked upon by a few schools of *Jains* as something worldly. Music, for instance, was identified with erotic love; a great artist like *Tiruttakka Tēvar* describes *Kāmam* as *'Vīṇaiccelvam'*, 'as the wealth of music or lyre'.[15] But *Campantar* and *Ārūrar* have experienced God Himself as a form of Art and they identify God with Art. Music, thus spiritualized according to *Campantar* removes the emotions like anger or *krōdha*[16]—*"Ēḻu icaikkiḷaviyāl veñcinamoḻittavar"*. Like *Tyāgarāja* and *Purandara Das, Ārūrar* also has realized the spiritual heights to which Art takes us.

The spiritualized music leads to God. What Prof. Srinivasachariar says about *Tyāgarāja* applies to *Ārūrar* as well but unfortunately we know nothing about the music of his compositions or of his age. *Ārūrar's* age was an age of renaissance in music as is proved by *Kuṭumiyāmalai* musical inscription of *Mahēndravarmaṉ* and *Tēvāram* is probably the product of this renaissance.

Prof. Srinivasachariar writes:

"Music aids *mukti* as *Brahman* is *rasa* or songs vibrating through the universe and it has its fruition in *yōga* and *bhōga.* The mind is spontaneously centred in Divine Love and joy wells up from within. The beauty of *Tyāgarāja's* (*Ārūrar's*) music lies

13. *Arist. Poet.,* 6.
14. 7:5:8.
15. *Cintāmaṇi,* 411.
16. 3:78:10.

in the concretising of the rare *rāgas* into *kīrtanas* and lyric music and in the marvellous development of the *saṅgatis* or musical notes of scales with shades of sweetness swelling from within. The rhythm of *rāgas* is different from that of words, as the inner music vanishes the moment it is dissected by grammar and logic. Every *rāga* has its specific mood and the *rāgas* sung by him exhaust almost the whole *gamut* of emotions. In his songs he saw *Rāma* (*Śiva*) face to face, spoke to Him heart to heart and passed through all *bhāvas* and he felt it his mission to spread the spell of *Rāmanāma* (*Śivanāma*). The mystic would sometimes enter into the bridal mood like that of *Sītā* (the lady love) and express his moods of separation, remorse and assault. When the mystic mood ripened he entered into *sānnyāsa* and soon after into the security of *tanmaya* and *sāyujya*. He became a mellowed philosopher as age advanced and his *bhakti* for *Rāma* (*Śiva*) transcended prayer and praise. In sweetness of diction, beauty of *bhāva*, free flow of imagination, in the blending of music and musing and finally in the rich variety of mystic experience musically inspired, he stands in *South India* unmatched in the realm of (modern) musical mysticism".[17]

It is in this view, that we can understand our poet speaking of dance, music and poetry as modes of worship and as forms of the Lord. In this connection, we may remember *Ñāṉacampantar* speaking of '*Pāṭal neṟi*' and '*Āṭal neṟi*',[18] 'The path of Poetry or music' and 'the Path of Dance' in the same way in which others speak of *Karma mārga*, *Jñāṇa mārga* and *Bhakti mārga*. Even the forms of the temples and the images as works of art are the various forms of beauty in which the Lord incarnates as it were, Beauty being the Absolute. Thus Art itself becomes purified and deified in our poet's aesthetics. Temple cult thus receives a new interpretation in this theory of Art. It looks as though we can group all kinds of worship around this theory of Art divine.

IV

BHAKTI OR ANPU, THE RESULTANT EXPERIENCE OF ALL ARTS:

In another place, *Nampi Ārūrar* speaks of *Śiva* as the significance of all arts: "*Palkalaipporuḷē*";[19] "*Nirampu palkalaiyiṉ*

17. *Mystics and Mysticism*, *pp.* 280-281.
18. 2:44:5.
19. 7:69:10.

porulālē porrit tankalal tolumavan"[19a]—'The *Bhakta* takes refuge in His feet realizing the truth of the various arts so full of His Grace praising Him with the words of these arts'. Education is thus deified and he speaks of the Lord as one who is worshipped by the educated—"*Karravar paravappaṭuvān*".[20]. The darkness of this Universe is cleared by that light which is no other than God. It is a pure light, the light of Grace, piercing through the darkness enshrouding the Universe of sound and the Universe of matter: "*Corpatapporul irularuttarulum tūya cōti*".[21] This idea we explained with the help of *Appar's Tiruttāṇṭakam.* 'Those who realize God as the greatest Good, speak that the Lord resides in all their words'—"*Narpatam enrunarvār corpatamār Civan*".[22] 'They read and realize the truth. They think of your greatness; their hearts melt. They give expression to the music of their hearts in poetry. There I realize you'—"*Ōtaluṇarntaṭiyār unperumaikku ninain tullurukā viracum ōcaiyaip pāṭalum nī ātal uṇarntu ....atiyēn*".[23]

God is, therefore, knowledge, the resultant experience of all education and art. He is, therefore, addressed as '*Arivē*'.[24] Usually this knowledge or *Jñānam* is considered under two heads: (1) the *Parajñāna,* the supreme direct knowledge or divine experience; (2) the *Aparajñāna,* the lower knowledge or the indirect knowledge about the Lord and the direct knowledge of other things. *Cēkkilār* speaks of them as, "*Civañāṉam*" and "*Kalaiñāṉam*".[25] *Nampi Ārūrar* shows the way to sublimate even the lower knowledge into the supreme knowledge. As the *Upaniṣads* often say, "When the mud, the root cause is known, all the mud vessels are known; when God is known, everything also is known". Knowledge at that stage ceases to be mere knowledge but experience '*Arivu*'; there is blissful '*Anpu*'. The great *Advaitist Madhusūdana Sarasvatī* identifies both *Bhakti* and *Brahmavidyā* in his *Bhaktirasāyana.* That is *Prabhakti* or *Sādhya Bhakti, Bhakti* as the end and goal and not *Bhakti* as the means to that goal. It is from this point of view that *Tirumantiram* identifies

19a. 7:62:6.
20. 7:61:11.
21. 7:68:6.
22. 7:84:3.
23. 7:84:2.
24. 7:6:4; 7:24:9, *etc.*
25. *Campantar Purāṇam* 70.

'Anpu' with *Śivam'*.[26] *Kannppar,* the hunter saint, who never went to any school for education, is praised by *Nampi Ārūrar* as "*Kalai malinta cīr Nampi Kaṇṇappar*"[27]—"the prince of that greatness full of arts". Now this greatness can only be the greatness of this *Bhakti* or Love which according to *Nampi Ārūrar* is equivalent to the resultant of all arts.

V

BHĀVANĀ :

The distinction between the world of sound and the world of matter, the *śabda prapañca* and the *artha prapañca,* was already referred to. God is sometimes contemplated as *Śabdabrahma.* All the sounds of words are ultimately from *Paranāda,* becoming grosser and grosser through *Paśyantī, Madhyama* and *Vaikharī* stages. The *yōgis* are said to hear and experience these various stages of this evolution. *Ārūrar* speaks of the Lord as He who has become the sound through the *Nāda* becoming evolved more and more: *'Nātamikuttu ōcaiyatāṉavaṉ"*.[28] *Ārūrar* makes more direct reference to this *yōga* path in his *hymn* No. 45, verse No. 9:

> *"Tēṭuvaṉ tēṭuvaṉ cemmalarp pātaṅkal nāṭoṟum*
> *Nāṭuvaṉ nāṭuvaṉ nāpikku mēlēyōr nālviral*
> *Māṭuvaṉ māṭuvaṉ vaṉkai piṭittu makiḻntuḷē*
> *Āṭuvaṉ āṭuvaṉ Āmāttūrem aṭikaṭkē".*

But *Ārūrar's* approach is really *Jñānayōga.* The *Upaniṣads* speak of the *Brahmabhāvana* or the contemplation on the self as the *Brahman.* One need not at this stage go into the complicated question whether this *Advaitic* relationship is monism or non-dualism. *Śaivites* also speak of the *'Śivōham bhāvanā'.* According to *Parimēlaḻakar,* it is the *'vāymai'* referred to in *Tirukkuṟaḷ* by *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* in his famous couplet, *"Tūuymai eṉpatu avāviṉmai maṟṟatu vāaymai vēṇṭa varum"*.[29] *Ārūrar* speaks of God as *'Nāṉāya paraṉ',*[30] 'The Lord who is I' but there are moments when he is not so sure of this firm grasp of the Lord when he feels the miseries of the world — *"Vaḻittalaip paṭuvāṉ muyalkiṉṟēṉ*

26. 270.
27. 7:39:2.
28. 7:84:9.
29. *Kuṟaḷ,* 364.
30. 7:38:4.

unnaippōl ennaip pāvikka māṭṭēn"[31]—'I attempt to follow the path but I cannot contemplate on the self as Yourself'. This refers to the '*Brahmaivāham Bhāvanā*' or the '*Śivōham Bhāvanā*'—the subjective experience of the teaching contained in the *Mahāvākya*—'*Tattvamasi*'.

VI

PRAṆAVŌPĀSANĀ:

Mantras like *Gāyatrī* may be in the form of prayers and the poems of saints are such *mantras*. There are two other *mantras*, which are referred to by *Ārūrar*. Of them, one is the *Praṇava* or the '*Ōm*'. These *mantras*, unlike prayers, are the *mantra caitanya* forms of God worshipped. By uttering them, the worshipper attempts at becoming one with the energy of *mantra caitanya*. Supernatural powers are thus developed but our saints are concerned with *Brahmānubhava*, becoming one with the Absolute. It is this higher or *Paracaitanya* that becomes the meaning, significance and reality of these *mantras*. The *Praṇavōpāsanā* is one of the well known methods of contemplation of God. The various meanings of *Praṇava* are collected in the book, *Tēvāram Vēdasāram*, at page 76. *Praṇavam* is said to represent the *Brahman* and the Soul. It is explained as a *mantra* representing the all pervasive form of the Lord and His various emanations. It is also explained as a '*yantra*' in the form of *Śivaliṅga*. It again signifies the *Pañcabrahma mantras*, which form the five faces of the Lord: *Isāna*, *Tatpuruṣa*, *Aghōra*, *Vāmadēva* and *Sadyōjāta*. *Praṇava* signifies this Universe as the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* says, "*Ōm iti idam sarvam*".[32] *Praṇava* is also said to be the form of the master or *guru* whilst the *śiṣya* becomes the body of the *guru*. *Nampi Ārūrar* refers to the sacred bull on which *Śiva* rides, being in the form of this *Praṇava*—a concrete representation of that truth God is *Paśupati*: '*Ōvaṇamēl erutu*'.[33] *Nampi Ārūrar* also sings thus : "*Ūnaṅkat tuyirppāy ulakellām Ōṅkārat turuvāki ninrān*"[34]—'He became the life inside all bodies and all over the world. He stood in the form *Ōm*'. This may refer to the statement of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*: "*Ōm iti idam sarvam Śivam*"

31. 7:54:5.
32. 1:8.
33. 7:5.10.
34. 7:67:1.

or the other statement of the *Upaniṣad* that the *Brahmam* as *Praṇava* represents both the inner and the outer principles.

VII

PAÑCĀKṢARA :

The other *mantra* is the *Pañcākṣara,* sacred for the *Śaivites.* It consists of five letters: *Na, Ma, Śi, Va, Ya.* The famous *Pāṇṭikkoṭumuṭi hymn* gives expression to *Nampi Ārūrar's* experience of the contemplation of this *mantra.* This contemplation, or rather the experience has become a habit with our saint, *"Uṉai nāṉ maṟakkiṉum collum nā Namaccivāyavē"*[35] — 'I may forget you, but my tongue will utter this *mantra Namaccivāya*'. He assures the Lord that he has no other attachment but the feet of the Lord which he always contemplates on. The very thought of this *Pañcākṣara,* he asserts, has brought him the birthless state.[36] The day when he leaves off this contemplation is looked upon by him as the day of his death.[37]

The *mantra 'Namasśivāya'* means, 'I am not mine; I am *Śivā's*'. It may, to start with, represent a prayer but it becomes the very name and form of the spiritual realization as the aspirant reaches higher and higher spiritual spheres.[38] It expresses complete self-surrender unto the Lord and it is this feeling of loving effacement of ego that is important. The five letters signify the five great principles, *Śi,* the Lord; *Va,* His Grace; *Ya,* the Soul; *Na,* the Divine power of illusion and *Ma,* the *Mala* or impurities. The soul gets rid of the *Mala,* when by the Grace of God, illusion disappears and the soul turns heavenward. Then follows the stage of complete self-surrender when egotism vanishes and the soul is lost in the Grace of the Lord. When this experience develops, even the distinction between the Grace and the Lord disappears and the undivided divine experience alone remains, the very breath of the follower and its sound resembling *'Śi'* and *'Ōm'* reminding him at every stage of this great experience. Taken thus representing these five principles, *Pañcākṣara* may be looked upon as five words and *Ārūrar* looks upon this *mantra* as *'Añcupatam'*[39]

35. 7:48.
36. 7:48:1.
37. 7:48:3.
38. See *Tiruvaruṭpayaṉ—9th chapter.*
39. 7:83:1.

which is thought of thrice a day, at dawn, at dusk and at mid-day. It is true that Indian grammars will justify calling a letter, a word.[40]

It is not clear whether the *'Añcupatam'* may not be interpreted as the *Pañcabrahma mantras.* But the tradition interprets this *Añcupatam* as *'Pañcākṣara'.* The *Śivāgamas* lay the great emphasis on the *Pañcabrahma mantras* and the *Ṣaḍaṅgamantras. Mantras* are said to end in seven different ways: *Namah, Vaṣat, Vouṣat, Svāhā, Svatāḥ, Hum* and *Paṭ. Ārūrar* speaks of the Lord as the one who is found of the seven letters and these are interpreted as referring to these seven suffixes or endings of the *mantras—"Eṭṭukantār ticai; ēḻukantār eḻuttu".*[41] It is also possible to interpret these seven letters as referring to the seven symbols of the seven *Śṛtis—Śa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da* and *Ni.*

VIII

MANTRAS, THE MUSIC OF THE LOVING SOUL, INDEPENDENT OF THE LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES:

According to some, the *mantras* which represent the correct sound of the vibrations can only be *Sanskrit mantras,* and on this score worship is often insisted and being carried on in the *Sanskrit* language; but as already pointed out, *Nampi Ārūrar* contemplates the worship with the *Vēdic hymns* as well as *'Tōttiram'* or *Tamiḻ hymns.* But the subtle *mantras* or *'Bījas'* belong to no particular language and, therefore, may be taken to belong to all the languages. The saints by their *mantra caitanya* can deify any sound or series of sounds which they utter or express into the truth of their spiritual experience; their verses form the vibrations of their process of spiritual experience. The *mantras* and *hymns* are not the vibrations of matter or *matrix* but the music of the loving soul: *"Uḷḷurukā viracum ōcai",*[42] something spiritual and significant in our approach to the Lord. The *Tamilian* heart sings the *Tamiḻ* music and the *Tamiḻ* poetry and when it is born of true love and knowledge, *Tamiḻ* poetry is equally divine. This is indeed a new and original way of discussing the great problem. The *Lalitā Sahasranāma* mentions our divine Mother as *Bhāṣā Rūpiṇī* (She who is in the form of *Bhāṣā,* the spoken language).

40. See *'Cakarakkilavi'—Tol.,* 62.
41. 7:19:8.
42. 7:84·2.

But *Tamilians* have always been looking upon their language as equally divine; they went a step further in identifying it with God.

Ñāṉacampantar, it is from this point of view, speaks of worshippers praising the Lord in all the languages:

> *"Kallāl niḻalmēya kaṟaicēr kaṇṭāveṉṟu*
> *Ellā moḻiyālum imaiyōr toḻutu ētta".*[43]

The importance is that *Campantar* speaks of the *Dēvas* praising the Lord in all the languages. As already pointed out, *Nampi Ārūrar* was interested in *Tamilizing* the onward march of the new culture of the *Pallava* age. He is, therefore, identifying the *Tamiḻ* language itself with God. The distinction between the *Śabda Prapañca* and the *Artha Prapañca* should be held in our mind when we read some of his verses. "The Lord is the eye of the world; He is the very idea of the seven worlds and He has become all of these *Artha Prapañca*" — *"Kaṇṇāy ēḻ ulakum karuttāya aruttamumāy".*[44] The question arises what is the form of the *Śabda Prapañca* in this divine display. It is very significant that *Nampi Ārūrar* should identify this with sweet *Tamiḻ* full of music: *"Paṇṇār iṉ Tamiḻāy"*[45] — continues our saint. Of course the Lord is beyond the *Śabda* and *Artha Prapañca*: *"Paramāya parañcuṭarē".*[46]

The great saints *Appar* and *Ñāṉacampantar* are great in the eyes of *Nampi Ārūrar* because they popularized and spread that *Tamiḻ* language and its culture: *"Nāḷum iṉṉicaiyāl Tamiḻ parappum Ñāṉacampantaṉ";*[47] *"Iruntu nīr Tamiḻōṭicai kēṭkum iccaiyāl kācu nittam nalkiṉīr"*[48] — Theirs was a divine service. God was so fond of their *Tamiḻ* poems that according to *Nampi Ārūrar,* He gave gold to those two saints. Hence *Ārūrar* says, *"Nallicai Ñāṉacampantaṉum Nāviṉukkaracarum pāṭiya naṟṟamiḻ mālai colliyavē colli ēttukappāṉ",*[49] that he is pleased to repeat the same garland of good *Tamiḻ* sung by *Ñāṉacampantaṉ* of good music and *Nāviṉukkaracar.*

43. 1:85:1.
44. 7:24:5.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*
47. 7:62:8.
48. 7:88:8.
49. 7:67:5.

The attributes of *Tamil* show *Nampi Ārūrar's* great reverence for *Tamil*: *"Vantamil"*[50] — Munificent *Tamil*; *"Narramil*[51] — The good *Tamil*; *"Tantamil"*.[52] The cool refreshing *Tamil*; *"Poyyāt-tamil"*[53] — The never lying *Tamil*; *"Centamil"*[54] — The upright *Tamil*; *"Aruntamil"*[55] — The rare *Tamil*; *"Nalattamil"*[56] —The *Tamil* of quality, beauty, bliss or excellence; *"Pāvanattamil"*[57] — The *Tamil* of the form of Poetry; *"Intamil"*[58]—The sweet *Tamil*; *"Uru Tamil"*[59] —The abundant *Tamil*. *Nampi Ārūrar* refers to the contemplation on the Lord as the *Tamilian* as something unique and important: *"Tamilān enru pāvikka valla eṅkalūr"*.[60] It is the music of this language, as the very music of the loving heart which makes the *Bhaktas* dance that appeals to our saint. *"Pannitait tamil oppāy"*[61] — 'You are like the *Tamil* in music'; *"Vantamil vallavarkal ēlicai ēlnarampin ōcai"*[62] — 'You are the very music of the seven strings of the harp or *yāl* of those experts in munificent *Tamil*'.

IX

GOD, THE PATRON OF TAMIL SCHOLARS, MUSIC AND DANCE:

The Lord is not only the *Tamilian* but the father of *Tamil* scholars — *"Tantamil nūrpulavānarkkōr ammān"*.[63] The Lord is the music inside the song — *'Pāttakatticai āki ninran"*.[64] These scholars of the South are full of knowledge of the arts. The Lord removes their miseries: *"Kalaimalinta tenpulavar karrōrtam itar tīrkkum.... ilai malinta maluvān"*.[65]

50. 7:83:6.
51. 7:3:10; 7:67:5.
52. 7:4:10; 7:84:10; 7:96:6.
53. 7:13:11.
54. 7:26:10; 7:36:4; 7:67:11.
55. 7:9:11; 7:72:11.
56. 7:18:10.
57. 7:5:10.
58. 7:100:10.
59. 7:19:11.
60. 7:31:6.
61. 7:29:6.
62. 7:83:6.
63. 7:96:6.
64. 7:62:3.
65. 7:30:11.

They praise Him with the ever new garland of words — *"Viruntāya colmālai koṇṭetti"*.[66] It is because poetry is the music of the heart that the Lord sympathized even that cruel *Rāvaṇa* and blessed him when he began to sing out of his heart: *"Pāṭṭukku an̠r̠u iraṅkiya ven̠r̠iyin̠ān̠"*.[67] One wonders whether *Rāvaṇa* sang in *Tamil̠*. This sympathy is what probably *Appar* will call *'Dayāmūla danmam'*[68] and this resonance to music and song *Ārūrar* sings and describes as the great victory of the Lord — *"Pāṭalin̠ icai muralap paṇṇāḷum pāvittup pāṭiyāṭik kaṇṭārtam kaṇkuḷirum"*[69] — 'The loving heart of the *Bhaktas* contemplate on his beautiful form for many days and express the music of the heart in songs and in dance whilst the musical instruments slowly hum and resound. They see the vision of the Lord as they had contemplated and their eyes are happy with this sight. How sweet is he when we think of Him?'

X

GOD, THE GREAT MUSICIAN, POET AND DANCER:

The Lord Himself is a great musician, poet and dancer, and the damsels of *Dārukavana,* when He comes a-begging at their doors as the great beauty of the forest, playfully enquire of Him whether He is an adept in dance and music and song.[70] One may wonder which language is referred to. But we must remember that this is a repetition of a question which they had put to Him in a previous verse.[71] They are complaining of the Lord stealing away their heart and their bangles: *"Kuravam nār̠iya kuḷalin̠ār vaḷai kolvatē toḻilāki nīr iravum imman̠ai ar̠itirē"*;[72] *"Centamil̠ttir̠am vallirō ceṅkaṇ aravam muṉkaiyil āṭavē vantu nir̠kum iten̠kolō?"*[73] He comes to them singing *Tamil̠* and they ask him, "Are you an expert in chaste *Tamil̠* music"?[74]

66. 7:30:4.
67. 7:62:9.
68. 233:6.
69. 7:30:10.
70. 7:36:7.
71. 7:36:4.
72. 7:36:6.
73. 7:36:4.
74. *Tamil̠* music differentiates between *'Paṇ'*, the *sampūrṇa rāgas* where occur all the seven *śrtis,* and *'Tir̠am'* or melodies deficient in one or more of the *śrtis.*

Love seems to be the very life of *Caṅkam* poetry. In another passage *Nampi Ārūrar* refers to the parrots understanding the *Tamil* language great for its fivefold divisions of erotic poetry almost willing to fly and carry the message of the love sick one — "*Tiṇai-koḷ centamil paiṅkiḷi teriyum*".[75] "*Tamil* seems to make even the cruel serpent dance in love in the hand of the Lord. Therefore, these damsels exclaim, "Are you an adept in the musical tunes of pure *Tamil?*" "*Centamiḻittiṟam vallīrō ceṅkaṇ aravam muṉkaiyil āṭavē vantu niṟkum iteṉkolō?*".[76] Therefore, *Nampi Ārūrar* thinks of the Lord as great *Tamil* dancer and *Tamil* poet. Was not the Lord, one of the poets of the *Caṅkam* age as *Appar* significantly points out — "*Naṉpāṭṭup pulavaṉāyccaṅkam ēṟi*".[77] No wonder *Ārūrar* sings of the praises of the Lord in *Tamil* — "*Tiruppukaḻ viruppāl paṉṉalam Tamiḻāl pāṭuvēṟ karuḷāy*"[78] — "Bless me who sings your praises with all love in the *Tamil* language of many beauties", and the Lord is there as the very nugget of gold to such scholars — "*Poṉṉāṉē pulavarkku*".[79] In another place he asks, "*Pāṭum pula-varkkaruḷum poruḷeṉ?*"[80] — 'What is that you will give unto the scholars who sing of you?' One wonders whether *Ārūrar* is not including himself amongst the *pulavars*. Even at the distant *Kētā-ram* in the north, far away from the *Tamil* land, he hears the *Tamil* sound and music. Through the old bamboos, rushes the wind and it looks as though the *mṛdaṅgam* (drum) is played on; it reminds him of the musical *Tamil* songs sung in *Tamil* tunes"[81] and he is there reminded of the two great saints *Nāvukkaracar* and *Ñāṉa-campantar*.[82]

XI

TAMIL IDENTIFIED WITH THE FORM OF THE LORD:

Our poet identifies *Tamil* itself with the form of the Lord. The divisions of the *Tamil* grammatical studies are the study of letters, study of words and the study of the subject matter. This is something peculiar to *Tamil* and it is very significant that *Ārūrar*

75. 7:65:2.
76. 7:36:4.
77. *Ap.*, 290:3.
78. 7:69:4.
79. 7:96:2.
80. 7:4:5.
81. 7:78:7.
82. 7:78:10.

thinks upon these different branches of study as the three great eyes of *Śiva* — *"Eluttoṭu corporuḷ ellām uṉ kaṇṭāṉē"*;[83] "You are the great thought" — *"Eṇṭāṉē"* — thus *Ārūrar* begins and goes to explain thereafter how this thought takes the verbal form. He thinks of the *Tamil* language alone and it is because of this he thinks of *'eḻuttu'*, *'col'*, *'poruḷ'* as the eyes of the Lord. We had seen him referring to *Tamil* as *"Tiṇai koḷ centamil"*[84] the *'tiṇai'* being the very subject-matter of the study of *Poruḷ*.

"Ilaikkum eluttukku uyirē ottiyāl"[85] — 'You are that vowel unto the letters written'. He sings in another place about *'eḻuttu'* : *"Akaram mutaliṉ eluttāki niṉṟāy"*.[86] This description is somewhat perplexing. Possibly, it is expressing the idea conveyed by the first couplet of *Tirukkuṟaḷ*: *"Akara mutala eluttellām"* — 'The vowel referred to is *'A'* which as mere *nāda* involved in the very opening of the mouth lies at the basis of every letter or sound' as is explained by *Parimēlaḷakar*[87] and *Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar*.[88] It is true *'eluttu'* may even mean a picture or painting as is proved by the existence of the phrase, *"Eluttunilai maṇṭapam"*[89] meaning the hall of painting; and in that case *Nampi Ārūrar* must be thinking of the Lord as the breath which will vivify a work of fine art.

XII

NAMPI ĀRŪRAR, A PARAMANAIYĒ PĀṬUVĀR, A MYSTIC POET:

All these songs are the outpourings of the hearts of *Bhaktas* the expression of their mystic experience, therefore it is divine poetry expressing the finest blossom of *Jñānamārga*—*"Poyyā nāvataṉāl pukalvārkaḷ manattiṉuḷḷē meyyē niṉṟeriyum viḷakkē yotta tēvar pirāṉ"*[90]—'Their tongues never utter any falsehood and they praise you. In the inner recess of their mind you stand firm and shine like a great lamp of truth'. *"Ōtaluṇarntaṭiyār uṉ perumaikku niṉain tuḷḷurukā viracum ōcaiyaip pāṭlum nī"*[91] may also be referred to.

83. 7:96:7.
84. 7:65:2.
85. 7:4:4.
86. 7:3:7.
87. Commentary on *Kuṟaḷ No.* 1.
88. Commentary on *Tol., No.* 46.
89. *Paripāṭal*, 19:53.
90. 7:23:9.
91. 7:84:2.

All these make it clear that when *Nampi Ārūrar* sings of *Tamiḻ* songs, he is having in mind the songs of those whom he had described in *Tiruttoṇṭattokai—Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār.* Therefore, *Ārūrar* himself has to be looked upon as a *Paramaṉaiyē Pāṭuvār*— a mystic poet. This part of our study has really revealed *Ārūrar's* worship and religion as Art-mysticism. Has not *Cēkkiḻār* said that the Lord Himself told *Ārūrar, "Arccaṉai pāṭṭē ākum"?*[92] We have already seen Prof. Srinivasachariyar speaking *Nampi Ārūrar* as a mystic poet and we have quoted his version fully about our poet.[93]

92. *Taṭut.,* 70.
93. *Mystics and Mysticism, pp.* 169-70 & *pp.* 246-247.

CHAPTER V

UNIVERSALISM

I

APPĀLUM AṬICCĀRNTĀR:

This insistence on *Tamiḻ* and the *Tamiḻ* group of saints does not signify any parochialism because as already explained our poet *Nampi Ārūrar* hastens to conclude, "*Appālum aṭiccārntār aṭiyārkkum aṭiyēṉ*"[1]—'I am the servant of those living beyond the region of the *Tamiḻ* land, beyond the present time, those who had lived in the past and those who live in the future'.

One verse in the *Tirukkētāram hymn* is significant from this point of view—"*Taḷicālaikaḷ tavamāvatu tammaip peṟil aṉṟē*".[2] He seems to condemn in this verse the narrow parochialism, reminding us of the fundamental unity of India. 'The choultries and *mutts* become places of spiritual development of *Tapas* only when one gets absolute self control'.[3] The words '*tammaippeṟil*' reminds us of the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* phrase, '*Taṉṉuyir tāṉ aṟappeṟṟāṉ*'.[4] He refers to the cult of holy waters and pilgrimages. He mentions *Kurukkēttiram* (*Gurukṣētra*), *Kōtāviri* (*Godavari*) and *Kumari* (Cape Comorin) to which people then flocked for bathing in the holy waters. But our poet along with *Tiruvaḷḷuvar*[5] feels that bathing and thereby cleaning the outer body alone are not enough. The mind has to be purified in these holy places: "*Kuḷiyīruḷam Kurukkettiram, Kōtāviri, Kumari*"[6]—'You have to bathe your mind at *Kurukkēttiram*, *Kōtāviri* and *Kumari*'.

The pilgrimage to *Śrīparvatam* involves a purification. It is not the outward sight of *Śrīparvatam* but its inward contemplation and the resulting purification, that are more important. 'This

1. 7:39:10.
2. 7:78:6.
3. 7:78:6.
4. *Kuṟal*, 268.
5. *Kuṟal*, 298.
6. 7:78:6.

great truth about *Śrī Parvatam,* you do not clearly realize'—*"Teḷiyīruḷam Śrī Parppatam"*[7]—thus he admonishes the pilgrims.

"This great country, from the south to the north, containing these holy places, forms a cultural and spiritual unity to be experienced through realization not to be merely known and to be travelled through. The parrot there pierces through the plantain fruit from south to north and eats it as a symbol of this realization and experience of unity of the land from north to south. With this experience in mind you should utter the word *Kētāram,* but alas! you do not"[8]—he sings. It is this wider outlook that inspired our poet to sing of *Śrī Parvatam* and *Tirukkētāram* in the north and *Tirukkētīccaram* in the south (in Ceylon).

II

ĀRŪRAR AND THE FEDERATION OF LIVING BEINGS:

It is not merely a federation of men of all times and climes that *Nampi Ārūrar* is contemplating but a federation of living beings as was made clear by our reference to the federation of love involved in the folk-lore of this country and glorified by *Nampi Ārūrar* in his poetry. In that famous verse describing *Dakṣiṇāmūrti,*[9] he brings the tiger, the serpent and the lion to *listen* to the message of the *Śaivite* God along with *ṛṣis* and *Dēvas.*

The *Jains* emphasize the principle of *ahiṁsā* or kindness to all living beings including the plants and invisible germs. This is the great principle given expression to by *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* in his memorable words, "Knowing one's own sufferings, how does one inflict suffering on other living beings?"[10] The word used for the living being covers all the varieties contemplated by the *Jains.* But the *Jaina* philosophy will restrict the attainment of salvation only to the human beings, and *Digambara Jains* will restrict it further to the masculine human beings. It is this *Jain* theory that is referred to by *Iḷampūraṇar* when he explains the special significance of the *Tamil* alphabet ending in *'ṉ'* which is important as the masculine suffix denoting the masculine human form which alone is capable of attaining salvation.[11] But the more kindly

7. 7:78:6.
8. 7:78:6.
9. 7:65:6.
10. *Kuṟal,* 318.
11. Commentary on *Tol.,* 1.

heart of the ordinary people lived and moved amongst the beasts, birds and trees as though amidst brothers and sisters like *St. Francis* of *Assisi*, speaking with them and understanding their heart, thanking every one of them for the help so kindly and ungrudingly given by them. They looked upon some of them as divine messengers—the serpent was deified; the bull was deified and so were many trees. Coming to be born in the midst of their innocent folks of *Tamiḻ* Land, the trees and rocks appeared as great *ṛṣis* lost in their contemplation. It is from this point of view that *Ārūrar* feels that the serpents, the tigers and the lions of the forest and the mountain, where *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* preached, also listened to His message.

A later day philosopher of *Śaiva Śiddhānta*, *Umāpati Śivam* is said to have given salvation to a thorny plant and also to an outcast *'Peṟṟāṉ Cāmpāṉ'* and thus this belief in the possibility of attaining salvation by all living beings without any more births had become the bedrock of *Śaivism* in South India. This is to a great extent due to the message of *Nampi Ārūrar* contained in the verse referred to above. The *Purāṇas* have elaborated this message by narrating stories of pigs and birds attaining salvation.[12] Therefore, though *Nampi Āūrar* was a *Tamilian* through and through believing in the greatness and divinity of *Tamiḻ* poetry and culture he never ceased to be a citizen of the loving federation of living beings.

III

ĀRŪRAR'S MYSTIC AND UNIVERSAL VISION:

Tiruttoṇṭattokai is therefore a vision of *Ārūrar*. It is a mystic and universal vision. The History is there; the particular individual and their peculiar modes of worship form the basis but this basis rises to the spiritual greatness of poetic truth and a mystic vision of universal significance. The whole universe is brought within its scope and transcended. All the contradictions and conflicts are dissolved in this vision of self sacrifice and love. This universal outlook of the mystic should not be spoken of as mere toleration. A short note on this universal outlook may help us to realize fully its significances.

12. See *Tiruviḷaiyāṭal Purāṇam—Paṉṟikku mulai koṭutta paṭalam, Karikkuruvikku upatēcitta paṭalam, Nāraikku mutti koṭutta paṭalam,*

IV

UNIVERSAL OUTLOOK:

Experience of God is claimed by the mystics of the world all over as real. They speak almost with one voice. This experience, or soul-sight of God or the Absolute, is not a mere feeling or thought or desire or will; it is real, objective, illuminating, elevating and blissful. The means to attain this goal is a great thirst for God, where, as Prof. Srinivasachariyar beautifully puts it, 'God-hunger of the soul is answered by the soul hunger of God'.[13] There, God is seen in all, all in God. This experience is not a passing whim or fancy, but is the very life of God in the love of the soul, which expresses itself in the service to all beings. The Absolute is the ground and basis, the *'Sat'* without a second: *"Ēkam ēva advitīyam Brahma"* is the *Upaniṣad.* But it is also the Great Dancer in the heart of the soul, seen also as the incarnation of love, in art-form pervading presence of God lost in His all pervasive love. The Absolute of Philosophy is the God of Religion and the Great *Dharma* of Ethics and the Beauty of Aesthetics.

If this were so, the question arises why should there be the conflicts of Philosophies, the wars of Religions. Experience is one and this mystic experience is beyond words. One has, therefore, to express it through symbols and metaphors. Here begins the source of all disputes which are to a certain extent verbal. *"Ēkam Sat Viprāḥ Bahudā vadanti"* — 'The Real is One; the Seers speak of it variously'—That is the great truth of *Ṛg Vēda* which characterizes the Indian thoughts from that time to the present. The mystics, therefore, never differ, though their followers and interpreters do. "The true mystics of all ages and climes claim to have had a direct experience of God and proclaim in their joy 'Come and see' and invite humanity to have similar experiences. They are free from the barriers that divide one man from another and therefore extend their spiritual hospitality to others".[14]

Thus do they promote the fraternity of faith. Theirs is a catholicity of universal brotherhood which is not tolerance, experience, expediency, ecclecticism, condescension or compromise. "The theological method of *pūrvapakṣa* and *siddhānta* or the

13. *Mystics and Mysticism* — *pp.* 87, 127, 401.
14. *Mystics and Mysticism* — *p.* 428.

establishment of one's view by the disjunctive elimination of the views of others may be logically justified but is alien to the synthetic temper of mysticism which is grounded in love, sustained by love and realized through love".[15]

"Mysticism insists on the idea of every *jīva* as the son of God as its inner source and sustenance. Every man can seek God and see Him spiritually in his own way, provided the quest satisfies the tests of moral purity and he invites others to share his experience. Though the experience of God is one, its expressions vary owing to the psychological differences of the mystics due to their birth and training and, therefore, homogeneity and regimentality have no place in mysticism. The starting points alone are different but the goal arrived at by spiritual induction is the same. Likewise, sects and religions may vary but the God of sects and religions is the same as He is their inner Soul. Unity in variety is thus the master thought of mystic experience and it removes the evils of regimentation arising from standardizing spirituality. Reality is posited as one and the *siddhānta* deduced from it is true; but at the same time it is inductively realized as one in spite of psychological variations due to the temperaments of the mystics as *adhikārins*. Thus mysticism is shown to be one though the mystics describe it in various ways; light is white but it is multi-coloured. This view promotes freedom and catholicity and avoids the pitfalls of individualism and ecclesiasticism.[16]

V

MYSTICISM OF ĀRŪRAR:

This catholicity is the very life of the mysticism of *Ārūrar*. The vision he makes us see by his beautiful phrase, "*Appālum aṭiccārntār*" is a vision of the brother-hood of universe enveloped in divine love and living in the loving service of the Lord. It is an eternal brotherhood transcending the past, the present and the future, wherein are found all the great souls thirsting for God of all times and of all climes. The *Tiruppuṉkūr hymn*[17] praises another vision this time of the soul hunger of God embracing in His universal love all kinds of living beings whatever their faults may be deifying and making all one with him.[17a] In this

15. *Mystics and Mysticism, p.* 420.
16. *Mystics and Mysticism—pp.* 427-428.
17. 7:55.
17a. 7:55:4.

very *hymn* he speaks of the various religions.[18] The religions were in his days divided into categories of six—"*Aṟuvakaic camayam*".[19] It has come to mean, in a generic sense all the religions, and to the later day *Tamilians* the six *Akaccamayams* (*Śaivam, Pācupatam, Māviratam, Kāḷāmukam, Vāmam* and *Vairavam*), excluding the *Akappuṟaccamayam, Puṟaccamayam,* and *Puṟappuṟaccamayam. Ārūrar* speaks here of the Lord blessing with His rare Grace the respective followers of these religions of great knowledge, in their respective spheres.[20] Here is no condemnation of any religion. On the other hand, our poet addresses God as the Prince of all religions—"*Samayaṅkaḷiṉ Nampi*".[21] He becomes the refuge of all kinds of worshippers. Our poet describes *Śiva* as the very forms worshipped by other religions. He is the king of the *Dēvas;* He is *Viṣṇu* and He is *Brahma*.[22] Whoever amongst *Dēvas, Ṛṣis,* Kings—and there is an infinite number of them—stand everywhere—anywhere they may be—and praise Him, He blesses them all with what all they desire. Thus He has become the refuge of all those coming to Him. He is all forms of Mercy to these—the Ocean of *Kaṟpaka,* our Lord.[23] He is all kinds of prayers and songs, all varied ways of approach, the ancient and the Good.[24] *Hinduism* knows of the Creator, the Protector and the Destroyer and *Ārūrar* asserts all the three are His forms.[25] "He is of the colour of the gem; He is of the form transcending these and He is of many many beautiful forms"[26]—says our poet. Therefore, our poet begs the people of the world to contemplate and praise Him as it suits them,[27] according to the nature of this world.[28] Our poet assures them all freedom from death which is the characteristic feature of Salvation. Those who contemplate on Him in many ways—they escape from the clutches of the miseries of death.[29]

18. 7:55:9.
19. 7:55:9.
20. 7:55:9.
21. 7:63:6.
22. 7:40:1.
23. 7:67:8.
24. 7:75:1.
25. 7:84:7.
26. 7:2:8.
27. 7:33:2, 3, 7.
28. 7:33:10.
29. 7:52:1.

VI

MYSTICISM, A SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY, AND ITS VALUE:

This aspect of mysticism—its synthesis of all conflicting philosophies and, therefore, its value are beautifully expressed by Prof. Srinivasa Achariar, in his valuable book "*Mystics and Mysticism*".

"*Mysticism* is synthetic philosophy *par excellence* and the supreme religion of love. It is the meeting ground between science and philosophy as the method of both is the same, namely, pursuit of truth without any prejudice. The opposition between faith (*śruti*) and reason (*yukti*) is overcome by the test of spiritual realisation (*anubhava*). The truth that the Absolute of philosophy or *Brahman* is the personal God of religion or *Bhagavān* reconciles the extremes of monism and theism. It removes the antithesis between metaphysics, psychology, and religion by insisting on the unity between existence and value, by the affirmation that God, the Infinite, is the ground of finite existence and the goal of experience. Psychology starts with the study of the empirical self or the *jīva* and ends with the knowledge of the *ātman* which is distinct from the *jīva* fettered by *karmas* and the *guṇas* of *prakṛti*. Mysticism is a theoretical speculation as well as a practical way of life and thus satisfies philosophic speculation and the spiritual ends of ethics and religion. Mysticism is divine dynamics and is more than theoretics. The contradiction between ethics as a pursuit of goodness and religion as the attainment of God is overcome by the basic assumption of ethical religion that God or the All-Self is the endeavour as well as the end. There is really no disparity between the logical ideal of truth, the ethical ideal of goodness and the aesthetic ideal of beauty as they are eternally self-realized in God as the home of the eternal values".[30]

"The philosophy of mysticism harmonizes the claims of revelation, reason and intuition and thus avoids the pitfalls of dogmatism, intellectualism and subjectivism by its fundamental postulate, that Reality is realizable by all. Truth is true for ever and true for all and *Brahman* or God is the *sat* without a second though its seers may express it in different ways. Revelation is a body of spiritual verities spiritually verifiable by all and is not to be identified with any historic revelation, prophet or book. Though

30. *Mystics and Mysticism*, pp. 418-419.

verifiability by personal experience is the highest test of religion, it is not its sole test as it may lapse into subjectivism or pragmatism. Reason mediates between revelation and intuition and when it is well disciplined, it can correct the evils of mere faith leading to fanaticism and mere intuition lapsing into subjectivism. But reason or *tarka* by itself has no finality as the logical or analytical intellect can only dissect Reality and not intuit it as a whole or Soul. The philosophy of mysticism ultimately takes its stand on or refuge into the Truth that Reality as *Brahman* or God reveals Himself to the mystic who seeks Him with all his heart and soul. In this way revelation, reason and intuition are ultimately one and all the *pramāṇas* are reconciled in the supreme test of Reality as realisation".[30a]

"Mysticism expounds the nature of God or *Brahman* as the inner ground of all beings and the ultimate goal of life and, therefore, it unifies existence and value. God is the Being of all beings beyond changing nature or *acit* and the empirical self or *jīva* subject to ignorance, evil and misery and is, therefore, the ultimate *sat*. He is also the supreme end of life satisfying the logical needs of truth, the ethical needs of goodness and the aesthetic needs of beauty as He is Himself *satyam, jñānam* and *sundaram*. These values are eternal and ultimately one as they are all housed in the Absolute. The mind functions in the three ways of thinking, willing and feeling and the *jīva* or *ātman* having *jñātṛtva, kartṛtva,* and *bhōktṛtva* is intellectual, volitional and emotional. They are the expressions of the self-consciousness of the self and when it is fully expressed in *mukti* or the unitive state Beyond, it is infinite. In this way, in *Brahman,* existence and value are one; He is the ground of all existents and their final goal. By attaining *Brahman,* everything is attained as He pervades all things as their inner Self and is their endeavour and end. As existence and value are integral, *Brahman* or God is and has truth, goodness and beauty and the mystic can realize God as the home of all values. This view renders mysticism all-comprehensive and inclusive".[31]

These passages may help us to understand and appreciate the universal outlook of *Ārūrar* and the value of this outlook. He has referred in loving terms of the various kinds of worship; for, to the mystic, "*Karma, jñāna* and *bhakti* are not mutually

30a. *Mystics and Mysticism, pp.* 424-425.
31. *Mystics and Mysticism, pp.* 425-426.

exclusive as they all lead to the same goal and the contemplative, the worker and the devotee may start differently, but they all meet in God who is Light, Life and Love. As every mystic seeks and sees God and transmits his experience to others, there is no conflict between individualism and socialism. Finally *Brahman* is beyond space-time and finite-infinite and therefore the mystic attains the security and stability of eternal bliss by ascending to the Absolute and becoming one with Him. He transcends the world of space-time but does not deny it and, therefore, what is yonder does not negate what is here. It is a fulfilment of the herenow and not its negation".[32]

VII

THE JAINS AND THE BUDDHISTS:

Ārūrar's description of the *Jains* and the *Buddhists* may at first sight appear to be contradicting our theory of his catholicity and universal outlook. It must be remembered that the remarks of the *Tēvārām* Saints do not apply to all the *Jains* and *Buddhists* in general. The importance of one great verse of *Ñāṉacampantar* has not yet been fully realized. In his *Nākaikkārōṇam hymn* (84), in the usual 10th verse, which always refers to the *Buddhists* and *Jains, Campantar* speaks of the Lord blessing His followers whilst he distinguishes among others, which, in the context of the 10th verse usually referring to the *Buddhists* and *Jains* should refer to these sects—three kinds of people, *viz.,* (1) the good people who expound *Dharma;* (2) the bad people who indulge in backbiting and (3) the others who being neither good nor bad spread scandals: *"Nallār aṟam collap pollār pūṟam kūṟa allār alar tūṟṟa aṭiyārk-karuḷ ceyvāṉ".*[33] Therefore, it is clear *Ñāṉacampantar* himself recognizes that there are good and great men, amongst the followers of *Buddhism* and *Jainism,* who went about expounding *Dharma* and they cannot be the objects of *Campantar's* criticism which can, therefore, refer only to those who back-bite and who spread scandal about *Śaivites* in particular.

Ārūrar's poems justify this conclusion of ours; for, his gravamen of the charge against these sects is, that they abuse and scandalize the *Śaivites* and the Lord. Descriptions of *Jains* and *Buddhists* which appear to us as very ungenerous, should, there-

32. *Mystics and Mysticism, pp.* 419-420.
33. 1:84:10.

fore, be taken to apply to this kind of people amongst them and not to all the *Jains* and *Buddhists* in general. The critics amongst these sects, in the eyes of our poet, were not even sincere, their minds being clouded by their prejudice, hatred and jealousy, they themselves indulging in force and mean subterfuges. Our poet speaks of their *'minṭāṭutal'*,[34] their way of rule or might; *'kunṭā-ṭutal'*,[35] their revelling in *meanness*: *'kunṭu'* may also mean their stoutness. These critics of *Śaivism* were ostensibly ascetics, pretending to perform *Tapas*, but really slaves of their tongue; for, they were stout and sturdy, characterized by their *'mōṭu'*[36] or belly, always hankering after rich food with *'kāṭi'*[37] or ghee.[38] Some of them were also ignorant. Therefore, our poet speaks of their *'kariya maṉam'*,[39] *'mūṭam'*,[40] *'poyccamaṇ'*[41] and describes their enjoying their nakedness.[42] The real *Tapasvins* lost all their attachment to the world and gave up everything, becoming, unconscious of even their nakedness. But such were not those people whom our saints criticized. Therefore, our poet often refers to them as *'Camaṇāṭiyum'*,[43] relishing in their nakedness. Our poet like *Campantar* in describing these sects emphasize the fact that they were contradicting each other by their very appearance: the *Jain* ascetics appearing naked;[44] the *Buddhists* appearing clothed:[45] the former eating whilst standing;[46] the latter eating whilst sitting.[47] In one place the description of the *Buddhists* occurs as *'Uṭai-yuṭaiya'*,[48] those who are clothed but it is sometimes read *'Muṭai-yuṭaiya'* when it will mean, those who are addicted to flesh eating or having the odour of flesh on their body. The *Buddhists* are against the slaughter of animals but latterly they found no objection in eating flesh obtained otherwise. As against them, the *Jains*

34. 7:82:9.
35. 7:15:9; 7:30:10; 7:82:9.
36. 7:90:9.
37. 7:44:9.
38. *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai, l.*, 57.
39. 7:44:9.
40. 7:90:9.
41. 7:63:9.
42. 7:22:9; 7:33:9.
43. 7:71:9.
44. 7:71:9.
45. 7:71:9.
46. 7:57:10.
47. 7:57:10.
48. 7:90:9.

refuse to eat even the flesh obtained otherwise and *Ārūrar* calls them *'Viṭakkiṉai oḻittavar'*. The intolerance of the people is brought out by the story of *Taṇṭiyaṭikaḷ* but there the spiritual greatness of *Taṇṭi* converted his erstwhile persecutors. Our poet refers to this incident.[49]

If the Lord is everywhere and within the heart of every one, He has to be in the heart of these people as well, becoming that way their great truth and our poet gives expression to this fundamental principle of mysticism. In this view of our poet's remarks there is really no hatred against the *Jains* and *Buddhists* as such, but against certain fanatics who are to be found in any religion, especially in a religion which has gained power and which is feeling that it is losing that power.

VIII

REFERENCES TO JAINS AND BUDDHISTS IN ĀRŪRAR'S WORK:

References to these sects in *Ārūrar* may now be studied:

i. *"Kuṇṭāṭum Camaṇarum Cākkiyarum puṟaṅkūṟum Kokuṭik-kōyil"*.[50]

'The Lord of the jasmine temple whom *Camaṇars* (*Jains*) and *Cākkiyars* (*Buddhists*) who revel in their depth of meanness, back-bite and slander'.

ii. The very word used by *Campantar*, *'Puṟaṅkūṟal'* is found in *Ārūrar's* criticism as well in the above passage and here they said to hurl abuses upon the Lord:

"Namaṇanantiyum Karumavīraṉum Tarumacēṉaṉum eṉṟivar
Kumaṇamāmalaik kuṉṟupōlniṉṟu taṅkaḷkūṟaiyoṉ ṟiṉṟiyē
Ñamaṇañāñaṇa ñāṇañōṇameṉ ṟōtiyāraiyum nāṇilā
Amaṇarāṟ paḻip puṭaiyarō namak kaṭika ḷākiya aṭikaḷē".[51]

'Is our Lord, the One, full of abuses hurled by the Jains?' In this verse our poet refers by names to certain leaders of this kind of critics amongst the *Jains, viz., Namaṇa Nanti, Karumavīraṉ* and *Tarumacēṉaṉ*. It is curious that the name *Tarumacēṉaṉ* is referred to as one of the leaders of *Jains* by *Campantar*.[51a] This *Taruma-*

49. 7:72:10.
50. 7:30:10.
51. 7:33:9.
51a. 3:39:4.

cēṉaṉ must be different from. *Appar,* who went under that name whilst he was a *Jain.* Their sturdy and proud forms are also referred to as appearing like '*Kumaṇa māmalaik kuṉṟu*' ('*Kumaṇa māmalai*' is not clear; it may be the hill belonging to *Kumaṇaṉ* of the *Caṅkam* age, *viz., Mutira malai.* '*Kumaṇam*' may mean 'bad smell' probably due to the *Jains,* not bathing, and perspiring whilst standing in the sun; or, it may mean the smell of the earth as referring to that of the mountain). Our poet refers here also to their nakedness and their shamelessness. He parodies not the idea behind the *mantras,* but the nasal sound of their *prākṛt mantras* which signify their taking refuge in *Arhat, Siddha, Sādhu* and *Dharma.* This parody is based on the purist view of our poet on languages. The *Tēvāram* writers insisted on preserving the languages in their pure state. They, for instance *Campantar,* looked upon *prākṛtam* or *pākatam* as the corruption of *Sanskrit*: '*Saṅgada baṅgam*'.[52] The '*maṇipravāḷa* style' in which the *Jains* and *Buddhists* indulged was anathema to the *Tēvāram* poets; for, in that mixture of languages they found neither the sweetness of *Tamiḻ* nor the majesty of *Sanskrit* — "*Āriyattōṭu Centamiḻp payaṉ aṟikilā antakar*".[53]

iii. "*Kariya maṉaccamaṉ kāṭiyāṭu kaḻukkaḷāl*
Eriya vacavuṇum taṉmaiyō?"[54]

The critics referred to here are said to be with a dark mind, *i.e.,* a mind clouded by prejudice and hatred. The Lord is abused by them out of their fire of jealousy. "Should the Lord be a prey to these eagles?" Our poet seems to suggest that our Lord takes pleasure in such abuses out of His overflowing Grace and love and he enjoys this as being one of His characteristic features. This is once again a great truth of mysticism. But the description '*kāṭiyāṭu kaḻu*', 'the eagles almost bathing in ghee' seems to be rather hard on the critics and this is probably due to the contrast which the poet wants to emphasize between the sincere love of the Lord and the cruelty of the pretenders.

iv. "*Iruntuṇ Tērarum niṉṟuṇ Camaṇum ēcaniṉṟavaṉ*".[55]

52. 3:39:2.
53. 3:39:4.
54. 7:44:9.
55. 7:57:10.

Here again the ridicule by those who hanker after food is underlined. The contrast between these warring sects is characterized by their very outward acts — one, sitting and eating and the other standing and eating. Our poet is simply echoing the very phrases of *Campantar* : *"Niṉṟuṉ Camaṇar iruntuṇ Tērar"*.[56]

v. "Poyccamaṉ poruḷāki īṇṭu Nampi".[57]

'Our Lord, the great Prince, who gathers the truth of the false pretenders.' These refer only to the *Jains* but it was already pointed out not to the devout followers of that religion but to the fanatic pretenders. Even unto them He becomes a Reality.

vi. "Naṉmai oṉṟilāt Tēraṟpuṉ Camaṇām
Camayamākiya tavattiṉār avattat taṉmai viṭṭoḻi naṉmaiyai vēṇṭil
.............................Śivakkoḻuntiṉaic ceṉṟaṭai manaṉē".[58]

'The *Tērars* or *Buddhists* who have not any goodness about them and those Jains who are mean, have renunciation of *Tapas* for their religion and they are themselves in the form of ascetics. But their characteristic feature is their falsehood (what a calamity!). If you leave this out and aspire for the good, O, my mind! go and reach the sprout of *Śiva*' Here again the attributes '*naṉmai oṉṟilā*', '*puṉ*' are restrictive rather than descriptive in their scope.

vii. "Kuṇṭāṭiyum Camaṇāṭiyum kuṟṟuṭukkaiyar tāmum
Kaṇṭārkaṇṭa kāraṇammavai karutātu kaitoḻumiṉ".[59]

'Those who indulge in mean acts, those who indulge in nakedness and those who have short dress or clothes — these have seen or realized certain truth as the great cause of causes. Do not think of them. Go and worship the Lord'. The causes referred to, may be the explanations which they give for various forms of *Śiva*, explanations which amount to scandalizing *Śaivism*. Or, it may mean the great truths of their religion explaining the cause of all the miseries of the world, and the causes which effect freedom. Their theory of *Karma* has no place for God's *Kṛpā*, and it may be

56. 1:71:10.
57. 7:63:9.
58. 7:64:9.
59. 7:71:9.

because of this our poet is begging of the *Śaivites* not to take their philosophy to heart. But in view of the other references to these critics it is better to take this also as referring to their scandals on *Śaivism.*

viii. "Kuṇṭikaip, paṭappiṉil viṭakkiṉai oḻittavar
Kaṇṭavar kaṇṭaṭi vīḻntavar kaṉaikaḻal
Taṇṭuṭait taṇṭita ṉiṉamuṭai aravuṭaṉ
Eṇṭicaik korucuṭar iṭam valampuramē".[60]

This verse has been discussed in our study of the *hymn* on *Valampuram.*[60a] Our poet describes the *Jains* as carrying water pots — a characteristic feature of the *Jain* ascetics. He also refers to their refusing to touch flesh. These praises have probably an underground satire as referring to the persecutors of a poor blind innocent soul (*Taṇṭi*). These persecutors were ultimately converted by *Taṇṭi.*

ix. "Kuṇṭāṭiya Camaṇāṭarkaḷ kuṭaic Cākkiyar aṟiyā
Miṇṭāṭiya vatuceytatu vāṉāl varu vitiyē".[61]

Here also our poet refers to the leaders *'Nātarkaḷ'* of *Jainism.* These are not righteous leaders but those who revel in mean acts. The *Cākkiyars* or *Buddhists* are described as carrying umbrellas. These sects in their ignorance abuse the Lord and follow the path of might or rowdyism. They reap the fruit by themselves becoming embodiment of rowdyism and the very form of all their abuse. This is but the rule — the law of Nature that always comes to work. Our poet seems to suggest that by the working of this law of nature which always comes to be fulfilled, these pretenders who abuse the Lord of the *Śaivite* followers, always thus meditating as it were, on this abuse, become themselves what they have been abusing. Here again the reference can only be to the false fanatics and not to the true devotees.

x. "Mōṭuṭaiya Camaṇarkkum muṭaiyuṭaiya Cākkiyarkkum mūṭam vaitta
Pīṭuṭaiya puliyūrc ciṟṟampalattem perumāṉaip peṟṟām aṉṟē".[62]

60. 7:72:10.
60a. *Vol. III.*
61. 7:82:9.
62. 7:90:9.

'The Lord who has established ignorance for the (false) *Jains* characterized by their protruding bellies and the (false) *Cākkiyar* or the *Buddhists* with their clothes or flesh'. This reference is obviously to the pretenders.

xi. *"Kuṇṭaraik kūṟaiyiṉṟit tiriyum Camaṇ Cākkiyappēy*
Miṇṭaraik kaṇṭataṉmai viravākiya teṉṉaikolō".[63]

'How is this that our Lord is one in the very outward form in which we see them with the *Kuṇṭar,* the mean, *Miṇṭar,* the arrogant, these diabolical people who roam about without clothes?' This is the mystic experience of seeing the Lord everywhere. The charge against them is that they are arrogant and mean, always wandering about like ghosts (and slandering the *Śaivites*). This verse expresses the wonder of the mystic experience of seeing the Lord in the very forms which the *Śaivites* usually hated as diabolical, mean and arrogant.

63. 7:99:10.

SECTION B

PHILOSOPHY

General Introduction

The philosophy of *Ārūrar* remains to be studied. The last portion of our study on Religion has shown his universal outlook. *Ārūrar* is not a philosopher explaining his metaphysical theories. He is a mystic poet and we have to weave his philosophy out of his poems. Is it necessary that we should forget the thrills of his poetry in order to understand his philosophy ? Perhaps not. His poetry gives us a glimpse into the mystic experience he had and into the trials he had to undergo to attain this experience. Therefore, we study him as a mystic poet and philosopher.

The world is there, and we are experiencing this world as spiritual individuals, *jīvas,* or souls. God is spoken of as the very basis of all these, the world and the souls, as their Organizer and as their Saviour. First, therefore, we take up Nature and gather together the views of *Ārūrar* on this. His Nature-mysticism is an exposition of his mystic experience and an elucidation of his philosophy of history and creation.

In the next part, we discuss the spiritual progress of the soul in terms of purgation, illumination, and love. The *sādhanas,* the theory of *karma,* the doctrine of Grace are all examined in the light of *Ārūrar's* poems.

In the third part, God as the final goal and as the highest spiritual experience, is explained in terms of the Erotic or Bridal mysticism of *Ārūrar* as revealed by the *Bhikṣāṭana hymns* and the great *'akapporuḷ' hymn* and in terms of his description of the final goal. In this part, we examine whether *Ārūrar* has given free vent to emotionalism and we find that the *'Cit'* (knowledge) aspect of God is emphasized even in his erotic mysticism or the mysticism of love even as the idea of service has been emphasized in the previous portion of our study. We conclude that he refuses to be labelled as a mere mystic, and his poems like the *Upaniṣads,* are there to be claimed by all the conflicting philosophies as peculiarly their own.

PART I

NATURE

Introduction

In this part, we discuss *Ārūrar's* conception of Nature or Universe or *Māyā* or *Pāśam*. According to our scheme, we first attempt to understand the views of the other mystics of the world to better understand the views of *Ārūrar* who is also a mystic. *Ārūrar's* views of Nature, its beauty and the *Aṣṭamūrta* form of God are then emphasized. Next is considered the philosophy of History and Time with reference to *Ārūrar's* poems which reveal that the whole process of creation and history is the divine drama of the Soul becoming God. In this connection, our poet's views on life and its miseries and happiness are also examined.

CHAPTER I

NATURE MYSTICISM

I

NATURE AND MYSTICS:

Every experience involves subject-object relation. The subject is usually generalized as the spirit or the soul. The object is generalized as Nature or Universe or *Prakṛti*. The basis or '*ādhāra*' of these, sometimes called their Ruler, is God or the Absolute, decribed under various names such as *Brahmam, Śivā, etc.* Nature which is called *Prakṛti* in Indian Philosophy includes not only what the Westerners call matter but also mind and the individualizing egoism or '*ahaṅkāra*'. Spirit is pure knowledge and is beyond this matter and is called the *Ātman*, which is itself further differentiated from the *Paramātman* or the Lord. Every Philosophy therefore, has to deal with the nature of these three categories and their inter-relationship.

Every Philosophy starts with the fact of this world, but the philosophies differ when they begin to explain the relationship of this world with the *Ātman* and the *Paramātman*. Mystics experience God in or through Nature and to all of them, it does not appear as opposed to God; they experience even there a unity through union. As *Ārūrar* describes the Lord, He is the *Sākṣin* or the Subject and the Object: *"Muṉṉilaiyāy muḻutulakum āya Perumāṉ"*.[1] These mystics, when they begin to express this inexpressible experience, necessarily have recourse to metaphors, allegories and parables. In that way, their language becomes poetic. Nature mysticism thus becomes one with Poetic or Artistic or Aesthetic mysticism.

With their vision and faculty divine, they intuit God and commune with the Ocean's liquid mass, the solid frame of earth and the shining clouds. It is said of Amiel, the mystic, that he had such overpowering intuitions of Nature, such grand and spacious immortal cosmogonic reveries, reaching the stars and owning such

1. 7:40:5.

instants of mystic experience as moments divine and ecstatic, in which his thoughts flew from world to world. The saints of *Tēvāram* have had such experiences which they have given utterance to in their exquisite poetry.

II

MYSTICS OF OTHER LAND:

1. *Plato*

The experience of other mystics may help us to better understand *Ārūrar's* Nature Poetry. Some speak of Nature as a dim shadow of the Absolute, whilst others see God's reflection in the mirror of Nature. According to Plato's simile of caves, we are all in the world of shadows being within the cave (the *baddha* — fettered stage), where we experience only the appearance and not the reality which we can directly experience once we get out of this cave. This reminds us of the *Vēdāntic* truth that *Brahman,* the *noumenon,* appears as the *phenomenon.* According to him the mystics build a ladder from Earth to Heaven, from sense perception to Soul-sight, from the beautiful forms of the world to the beatific idea of God.[2]

In his dialogues, Plato makes *Phaedrus* speak to *Socrates*:

"These are the lesser mysteries of love, into which even you, Socrates, may enter; to the greater and more hidden ones which are the crown of these, and to which, if you pursue them in a right spirit, they will lead, I know not whether you will be able to attain. But I will do my utmost to inform you, and do you follow if you can. For, he who would proceed aright in this matter should begin in youth to visit beautiful forms; and first, if he be guided by his instructor aright, to love one such form only — out of that he should create fair thoughts; and soon he will of himself perceive that the beauty of one form is akin to the beauty of another; and then if beauty of form in general is his pursuit, how foolish would he be not to recognize that the beauty in every form is one and the same! And when he perceives this he will abate his violent love of the one, which he will despise and deem a small thing, and will become a lover of all beautiful forms; in the next stage he will consider that the

2. Idea is real according to *Plato*: 427 *B.C.* to 347 *B.C.*

beauty of the mind is more honourable than the beauty of the outward form. So that if a virtuous soul have but a little comeliness, he will be content to love and tend him, and will search out and bring to the bright thoughts which may improve the young, until he is compelled to contemplate and see the beauty of them all is of one family, and that personal beauty is a trifle; and after laws and institutions he will go on to the sciences that he may see their beauty, being not like servant in love with the beauty of one youth or man or institution, himself a slave, mean and narrow-minded; but drawing towards and contemplating the vast sea of beauty, he will create many fair and noble thoughts and notions in boundless love of wisdom, until on that shore he grows and waxes strong, and at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science, which is the science of beauty everywhere. To this I will proceed; please to give me your very best attention:

"He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty (and this, Socrates, is the final cause of all our former toils) — a nature which in the first place is everlasting not growing and decaying, or waxing and waning; secondly, not fair in one point of view and foul in another, or at one time or in one relation or at one place fair, at another time or in another relation or at another place foul, as if fair to some and foul to others, or in the likeness of a face or hands or any other part of the bodily frame, or in any form of speech or knowledge, or existing in any other being, as for example, in an animal, or in heaven, or in earth, or in any other place; but beauty absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting, which without diminution and without increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of all other things. He who from these ascending under the influence of true love, begins to perceive that beauty is not far from the end. And the true order of going, or being led by another, to the things of love, is to begin from the beauties of earth and mount upwards for the sake of that other beauty, using these as steps only and from one going on to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is. This, my dear Socrates", said the stranger of Mantineis, "is that life above all others which

man should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute; a beauty which if you once behold, you would see not to be after the measure of gold, and garments, and fair boys and youths, whose presence now entrances you; and you and many a one would be content to live seeing them only and conversing with them without meat or drink, if that were possible — you only want to look at them and to be with them. But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty — the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of morality and all the colours and vanities of human life thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty simple and divine? Remember how in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has no hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life?"[3]

2. *Plotinus*

Plotinus (204 A.D. — 270 A.D.) who is the next great mystic of the West speaks of men and things radiating or emanating from the Lord, and His Divine Trinity of the (1) nous (or the One), (2) the One-Many and (3) the One and Many,[4] reminds us of *Śaiva Siddhāntins' Śiva,* (1) transcending the world, (2) being one with the world and (3) being in the company of the world — "*Tāṉāy vēṟāy uṭaṉāy*";[5] "*Avaiyē tāṉēyāy*".[6] According to him, matter is the principle of externality and the world we perceive with our senses is the shadow of the spiritual world. Nature is not the illusion but the sleeping spirit. According to Plotinus, Art or Poetry, which is not mere imitation but creative imagination, passes beyond the shadow and intuits the real or prime or divine beauty, what the German philosopher Schelling (1775-1859 A.D.) calls the artistic intuition of Cosmic Beauty.

3. *English Mystics*

English Mystics are characterized by their worship of Nature. To William Blake (1757-1827 A.D.) the earth is a distorted

3. *Dialogues of Plato by B. Jowett, Vol. I, pp.* 580-82.
4. *Christian Mysticism by W. R. Inge,* p. 95, year 1899.
5. *Campantar,* 1:11:2.
6. *Śivajñānabōdham-sūtram,* 2.

shadow of Spiritual Reality and he is certain that the Eternal is in everything. The eyes of man, according to him, can therefore, open into Eternity and his imagination can expand into Infinity, the multiple vision leading ultimately to that of oneness of Divinity, seeing a world in a grain of sand, a Heaven in a wild flower holding Infinity in the palm of his hand and Eternity in an hour.

4. *Sufism*

This reminds us of Jami, a Persian Sufi Mystic (1414-1492 A.D.) who thinks:

"Each species of matter did He constitute
A mirror, causing each to reflect
A Beauty of His visage; From the rose
Flashed forth His Beauty and the nightingale
Beholding it loved madly. From that fire
The candle drew the lustre which beguiles
The moth to destruction".

"All that is not one must ever
Suffer with the wound of absence
And whoever in Love's city
Enters, finds but room for one
And but in oneness union".

Sufis believe that *Allah* brought forth this world as an image of Himself out of love and the Sufi Mystic Hallaj (854-922 A.D.) was blessed with the cosmic vision of God in all forms as the All-Self, whilst Ibn-al-Farid beheld the Lord in every charm and Grace and loveliness of life.

5. *Spinoza*

Spinoza, the ethico-religious philosopher, saw all things in God,[7] and God in all things being their essence,[8] for to him all things were God under the form of eternity.

6. *Taoism*

The Chinese Taoism (570 B.C.) asserts that Reality 'Tao' animates and nourishes all beings.

7. *Ethic of Benedict De Spinoza, Duckworth & Co.*, 1899, *I Part, prop. XV.*
8. *Ibid., prop. XXV.*

III

IMMANENCE :

William Blake (1757-1827 A.D.) is only echoing the mystic Bohme (1575-1624 A.D.) who speaks of our seeing a flower, to whom the world is but a mirror of the Deity where the soul could converse with the Lord therein whilst even a flower in the wall will reveal God in all His glory like the lilies in the starry heavens.

Tennyson also experiences the same truth when he sings :

"Flower in the crannied wall
I pluck you out the crannies
Hold you here, root and all in my hand
Little flower, but if I could understand
What you are, root and all and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

Nature mysticism inspires, thus, the *Bhakta* to experience and enjoy the beauty of God objectively in all things and in the end he realizes the mystery of this Absolute beauty remaining already enthroned in the heart as the Lord of Love. Tagore, it is said, had a vision of the world bathed in the radiance of beauty, beauty which according to him links Heaven and Earth when the song of the singer was not distinct from Him who was *Rasa* itself in the drama of love and spiritual wedding.[9]

But this Nature mysticism ought not to be confounded with Pantheism and some forms of Nature mysticism which remain restricted to Nature alone without ever thinking of the spirit or God who whilst immanent in Nature transcends it as well. Cosmic consciousness is the consciousness of the Cosmos in its entirety but it is not a mere addition or summation of all things of this world. Cosmos is the eternal expression of the dynamic love of the Lord. Creation is the process of the Formless God revealing to us in varied forms. The one becomes many out of love. He who is beyond space time is now in the spatial order. This is to help the soul clothed in space and time to unveil itself and intuit its true divine nature, to kiss it away as it were unto divinity. *Ārūrar* puts it, "Passing through this embodied stage the soul transcends this body to a

9. See *'The Philosophy of Tagore' by B. G. Ray.*

higher disembodied spiritual sphere".[10] The intuition of the mystic is not ordinary perception of the eyes of the physical body *'Cākṣusa dṛṣṭi'* or a dialectic knowledge or *'Tarka dṛṣṭi'*. It is the perception of the divine inner eye or *'Divyacakṣus'* and, therefore, it is a divine vision or *'Divyadṛṣṭi'*. It is the perfect experience or the *Pūrṇānubhava*.[11]

Something of this subjective feeling is found described by Wordsworth:

"Far and wide the clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces could he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank
The spectacle; sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live; they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request:
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him: it was blessedness and love !"

"Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, — both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,

10. 7:10:6.
11. See, *Mystics and Mysticism*, pp. 48-49.

And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things".

"Until the breath of this corporal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things".

Shelley addressing the skylark expresses his experience thus:

"My spirit like a charmed bark doth swim
Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet singing,
Far, far away into the regions dim
Of rapture, as a boat with swift sails singing
Her way adown some many-winding river,
Speeds through dark forests o'er the water swinging".

To the mystic, the universe appears animated by God. The whole Cosmos appears as His *Rūpa*. The Universe as form of God was revealed to *Arjuna* by *Kṛṣṇa* and the *Tamilians* can read in their own language the description of *Murukaṉ* appearing in this *Viśvarūpa* before *Cūrapaṉmaṉ* as described in the *Tamiḻ Kanta-purāṇam*. Sometimes it is terrifying, sublime, and majestic as it was to *Arjuna*. But to these mystics all this is the play, the drama of that love enshrined in their heart. It is the beauty of the Universe, '*Bhuvana Sundara*' and the *Bhāgavata* calls it or the '*Trailōkya Sundara*' as the *Tamilian Śaivites* will have it. "The world is the vessel of the lamp; the sea is the oil; the sun is the flame": Thus appears the Universe as the divine Light to *Poykai Āḻvār*:

"Vaiyam takaḷiyā vārkaṭalē neyyāka
Veyya katirōṉ viḷakkāka".[12]

IV

BODY AS TEMPLE : SOCIAL SERVICE :

The objective world does not exhaust Nature. Nature appearing as the objective world is not only all that we see outside us,

12. *First Tiruvantāti*, 1.

it includes our body also. Even this becomes deified as the temple of the Lord and some speak of even this becoming ultimately divine. The others moving with their bodies on this earth also form part of this world and Nature, and they are the walking temples: *'Naṭamāṭum kōilkaḷ'*.

"The heart-beat in the mystic is in tune with the heart-beat of the world owing to spiritual community and the immanence of God in each person. Like the germ-cell in the body, the soul is the epitome of the universe as an inter-related living whole".[13] It is the microcosm of the Cosmos macrocosm.

As in the *'Aṇḍam'* (macrocosm), so in the *'Piṇḍam'* (microcosm) the Lord is reflected in the mirror of our soul; nay, he is *'Antaryāmin'*, the inner soul; as such, He is the Reality of reality, the Life of life; the great Light as the *Upaniṣad* puts it from which the lesser lights get their illumination. The light of *Aṇḍam* is found in the light of the *Piṇḍam*. *'Aṉpu'* or love is the vessel, *'ārvam'* or *'prēma'* or the hankering after the Lord is the oil and the blissful heart is the wick and *Jñāna* is the flame : — thus the Lord appears to *Pūtattāḻvār* as the inner light :

"Aṉpē takaḷiyā ārvamē neyyāka
Iṉpuruku cintai iṭutiriyā — Naṉpuruki
Ñāṉac cuṭarviḷak kēṟṟiṉēṉ Nāraṇaṟku
Ñāṉat tamiḻ purinta nāṉ".[14]

These two lights — outer and inner — reveal the hidden Lord, God as the *"Sarvabhūta sthitha ātma"*, the soul in all things. Every soul appears as the temple of the Lord demanding our worship and service. Therefore, the life of the mystic is the life of social service, *'Lōkasaṅgraha'* working for the universal salvation.

Svāmi Vivēkānanda begged of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa to bless him with the never-ending *samādhi* and the master was sorry that his disciple, a vast receptacle of light, should think of remaining for ever absorbed in personal joy. He assured his loving *śiṣya* that the latter would realize the unique divinity of all beings; and Svāmi Vivēkānanda, thus transformed, came to assert that the only God in whom he believed as the sum total of all souls and proclaimed : "Above all I believe in my God the wicked, my God the miserable,

13. *Mystics and Mysticism*, p. 57.
14. *Second Tiruvantati*, 1.

my God the poor of all races". Has not the *Buddha* said, "All those sins of the world, let them fall on me; let the world be saved ?" Has not Rāmānuja welcomed hell for himself if the world could be saved through him ? Is this not the characteristic feature of all the saints of *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* as described by *Cēkkiḻār* :

> "*Kūṭum aṉpiṉil kumpiṭalē aṉṟi*
> *Vīṭum vēṇṭā viṟaliṉ viḷaṅkiṉār ?*"

The Western mystics also saw in every living being the expression of God and the whole world as a family even as the Hindus did, speaking of the family as '*Vāsudaiva kuṭumbakam*'.

Blake's poem 'Tiger tiger' is known to every child reading English and there he sees the creator even in the cruel animal of the forest. St. Francis of Assisi saw God in the leper and kissed him. He spoke of the brother the Sun, the sister the Moon, the mother the Earth, and he moved in the world, practising the presence of God, holding even the wolf as his blood brother. The Tamilians proclaimed from early times, "*Yātum ūrē, yāvarum kēḷir*" — 'All places are our abodes and all men are our relations.'

V

NATURE AS THE FORM OF THE LORD:

The *Tēvāram*, both of Campantar and *Ārūrar*, abounds in the description of Nature, its cities, rivers and mountains these saints visited. Very often a large part of these verses is found to be such description and this has surprised many readers. The places they visited are equally holy and divine as the temples. Therefore, the description of Nature is one way of describing the Lord.

Appar's statements throw a flood of light on this problem "*Tāṉalātu ulakamillai, cakamalātu aṭimaiyillai*"[15]–'There is no world apart from Him; apart from this world He has no service'. In another place he sings, "*Cakamalātu aṭimaiyillai; tāṉalāl tuṇaiyumillai*"[16] — 'Apart from this world He has no service; He has no companion except Himself'. His third statement is much more important and significant: "*Umaiyalātu uruvam illai; ulakalātu uṭaiyatu illai*"[17] — 'He has no form but that of *Umā;* He has no

15. 4:40:1.
16. 4:40:8.
17. 4:40:9.

garment apart from this world'. The One without a second who remains formless to start with becomes two, assuming in addition the form of the Mother Goddess who is none else than His own Grace or '*Citśakti*'. The world which is also called His *Śakti* — His *Parigraha Śakti* — is evolved as the scene of divine service and this world is nothing but Him. This world is the beautiful garment of God. In another verse of his, the beautiful rising full moon as representing the object of the sense — of sight, the spotless music of the harp as representing the object of a sensation of hearing, the zephyr casting the fragrance of flowers which forms the object of the sensation of smell, the bulging out fruits ripening in Summer representing the object of the sensation of touch and the cool and refreshing water of the lotus pond wherein hum the bees as representing the object of the sensation of touch — these are the only comparisons which *Appar* could think of for describing divine bliss. Thus it is clear, the world is divine — the veritable Mother Goddess in the eyes of these poets. Thus God Himself in this form becomes the means of attaining Him as goal at the end, as the *Vaiṣṇavites* say He is both the '*upāya*' and the '*upēya*'.

The *Aṣṭamūrtas* or the eight forms of *Śiva* have been often mentioned by *Ārūrar*. In one place he calls the Lord '*Aṭṭaṉ*'[18] These eight are arranged in their order of progressive evolution, (1) the five elements : ether, air, fire, water and earth; (2) the Sun and the Moon (probably as representing time) and the sacrificer or the soul. The Lord becomes everything. He has become the flesh or the body, the life or the soul and the organic relationship of the body and soul. He has thus become the whole world : the Heavens above, the Earth below, with the oceans and the mountains.[19] "He is the unique one in all the four directions. 'He is myself'. He is the air, the fire, the sea, the crest of the mountain".[20] "He is the knowledge, standing as the five elements".[21] He is the world and the Heavens, the day or the central axis of the world, the snow clad mountain, the sea, the water, the fire, the long travelling wind, the wide expanse of space and the shadow or the reflection — '*niḻal*' : There is another reading '*nilaṉ*' meaning

18. 7:80:8.
19. 7:1:7.
20. 7:38:4.
21. 7:27:8.

earth.[22] (This probably suggests that all these evolved forms are the shadow or reflection of His reality). He appears all pervasive in the mind of those who contemplate on Him appearing there as the wind, the fire, the Sun and the Moon.[23] He has become the flesh, the refuge of the soul, the wide space, the sky where the clouds shower the rains, the intellect and the fate and the followers, therefore, think of Him variously.[24] He is the encircling light, the water, the earth, the fire, the air, the ether, the sun, the seven tunes of the *Tamils* and the sound of the seven strings of the harp and the ruler of the seven worlds.[25] He is the Lord, the sound evolved from '*nāda*', the flame of knowledge as the life of this body and crops. He lives in the heart of His followers.[26] He is the word and the meaning, the moon in the sky, the pure flame, the wind, the fire and the earth, the great dancer of the forest.[27] He becomes the lightning and there He stands as fire.[28] "You have entered the body and become its life and you have become the three lights".[29]

He rains, becoming the large clouds; He is the meaning of all arts; He sympathizes and commingles with the soul which perceives; He stands as the day and the night; He is the ear that listens discerningly. He is the taste and the tongue that tastes; He is the eye that sees and the roaring sea and the mountain.[30] We have explained this as giving expression to the unity of divine experience and everything realized as the loving Lord.[31] The same idea is expressed in another verse : "I assert you are the creation, destruction and sustenance. I assert you are the word and its meaning which people speak. I assert you are the tongue, the ear and the eye".[32] The commingling is referred to as '*uṭanātal*':[33]

"Eṅkē̱num iruntuṉ aṭiyēṉ uṉai niṉaintāl
Aṅkē vanteṉṉōṭum uṭaṉāki niṉṟaruḷi

22. 7:2:10.
23. 7:30:2.
24. 7:82:1.
25. 7:83:6.
26. 7:84:9.
27. 7:84:3.
28. 7:86:6.
29. 7:88:3.
30. 7:59:3.
31. *Vol. II.*
32. 7:4:7.
33. 7:23:2.

Iṅkē eṉviṉaiyai aṟuttiṟ ṟeṉṉaiyāḷum
Kaṅkā nāyakaṉē kaḻippālai mēyāṉē".[34]

He is the eye of those who want to see Him.[35] "You are the creation and you are its withdrawal".[36] "You have created all the worlds".[37]. "He is possessed of all the worlds".[38]

VI

THE DRAMA OF SOUL MAKING:

All this Drama of creation is in the interest of deifying the suffering soul by making it go through the several grades of experience:

"*Coṉṉa ittoḻilkaḷ eṉṉa kāraṇam tōṟṟa eṉṉil*
Muṉṉavaṉ viḷaiyāṭṭeṉṟu moḻitalum āmuyirkku
Maṉṉiya puttimutti vaḻaṅkavum aruḷāṉmuṉṉē
Tuṉṉiya malaṅkaḷ ellām tuṭaippatum collalāmē".[39]

The process of sublimation or transmutation is often referred to by *Ārūrar*: "The *māyam* is shown and then the birth, and then the mind which does not forget Him. Next is shown the body (which taking advantage of all this helps us to reach the Lord)".[40] "He has become our head, eyes, ears, nose, mouth and body and thus He has removed the cruel *karma*".[41] "To be relieved of the fetters of *karma*, He removes the expanse of the terrific ocean of birth. Out of the power of His touch or meeting, He yokes us to His service. The wealth of *tapas* is thus amassed. He becomes easy of reach to be contemplated upon by His followers. He opens the gate of *Śivalōka* of His feet. So He is within the mind of those worshipping Him".[42] Another verse explains this further: "He destroys the delusion of a mind; He resides within the mind as the intelligence. He creates the magic of the body. He destroys(?) becoming the wind and the fire; for offering rest, He brings on diseases. He destroys cruel *karma* in the twinkling

34. 7:23:2.
35. 7:45:7.
36. 7:56:4.
37. 7:23:8.
38. 7:98:3.
39. *Civañāṉacittiyār-Cupakkam, Cūt.*, 1:36.
40. 7:95:7.
41. 7:62:9.
42. 7:67:7.

of an eye".[43] "The bondage and freedom are of your making".[44] "Many of your followers and others, you lead astray".[45] "He has the one idea of protecting the world as its very apple of the eye".[46] "He is the treasure of all living beings and their light".[47] "He is the light of all living beings of the world".[48] "He oozes and sprouts as the nectar specially belonging to all the living beings".[49] "He has entered the mind and has not known going out".[50] "He is the life inside our body and outside there, the world in the fleshy parts. He becomes the very breath, but stands all through the universe in the form of '*Ōm*' ".[51] In another place, the poet expresses the truth almost echoing the Upaniṣad. "He who cannot be thought of even by our mind, the Lord of Heavens, the Great who loves the '*pañchagavya*', He becomes an atom and assumes the form of fire-spark and enters, compressed into this body spreading Himself all over. He is my wealth".[52] "He is all pervasive as the fragrance in the flower".[53] "He becomes the life and significance of everything without whom everything becomes bitter and a lifeless painting and a drawing board: "You are the life unto the paintings and the basis or the leaf on which the painting is drawn (the painting is the world as the creative art). You appear as its exact facsimile (This is according to the reading, "*Iṇaiyē ottiyāl*"; according to the other reading "*Uṉaiyē ottiyāl*"— 'You are like unto yourself'). To the suffering soul He is like the cloud, bringing life and happiness to the famishing crops".[54] He gives us a much more intimate relationship, the relation of the lover and the loved. Because of the immensity of this creation, he speaks in terms of the male elephant and the female elephant.[55] "He comes, the unique Lord, commingling in our speech as the roaring ocean and the mountain, from the depth of the one to

43. 7:56:8.
44. 7:88:4.
45. 7:29:9.
46. 7:52:6.
47. 7:83:7.
48. 7:59:7.
49. 7:63:4.
50. 7:21:1.
51. 7:67:1.
52. 7:97:3.
53. 7:68:3.
54. 7:4:4.
55. 7:4:9.

the height of the other, and as time, every part of it, from morning to evening".[56]

VII

NATURE—TERRIFIC AND AUSPICIOUS:

Ārūrar refers to the *Viśvarūpa* as well. In that form the dome of the universe is the crown of His head—"*Aṇṭa kapālam cenni*".[57] "The *purāṇic* forms sometimes represent this terrific form. Therefore, the exclamation, 'We are afraid of serving you, who go beyond this universe and stay there away from the Beyond".[58] But all that is the speech of the loving damsel enjoying it all, as the Beauty of her Beloved.

Nature has two sides, the terrific and the auspicious, which according to *Bhandārkar*, develops into the worship of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*. He hastens to add that gradually also He has become auspicious, *Rudra* being Himself *Śiva*. The word *Śiva* is important, meaning as it does, the auspicious. The terrific aspect of the Lord becomes the lovely form of the Absolute. It becomes the form of universal love. From the very beginning, *Rudra* is the Lord of the sinners and the down-fallen. He lovingly carries all that is discarded by the world, as ugly, useless, terrific and fierce, the bones, the serpent, the wild flowers, the fire, the tiger, and the elephant and the ghosts. Who else will love them if not He, the lover and the Lord? To the mystics, these become the ornaments and the companion of the Lord:

> "*Ēṉakkom pummiḷa vāmaiyum pūṇṭaṅkō rēṟumēṟik*
> *Kāṉakkāṭ tiṟṟoṉṭar kaṇṭaṉa colliyuṅ kāmuṟavē*
> *Māṉaittō loṉṟai yuṭuttup pulittōl piyaṟkumiṭṭu*
> *Yāṉaittōl pōrppa taṟintōmēl nāmivark kaṭpatōmē*".[59]

"He adorns Himself with the teeth of the boar and tortoise, rides on the bull in the forest, with the skin of the deer, tiger and the elephant and his *bhaktas* seeing these speak as they like intoxicated with divine love".

56. 7:73:1.
57. 7:22:2.
58. 7:2:2.
59. 7:18:4.

VIII

TRANSCENDENCE :

The Lord is thus inside the world becoming the world itself but He is beyond it all. The story of *Viṣṇu* and *Brahma* not knowing the beginning or the end of the pillar of fire appearing before them emphasizes this great truth.

Ārūrar is not a mere Nature mystic. He intuits God in Nature and as transcending Nature. The Lord is not only in the Universe; [60] He is the nectar dancing in joy beyond the Universe of all Universes.[61] He is also beyond the Universe transcending it.[62] The Universe is but matter and He spiritualizes it. He is the One great Light of all eight points of the compass.[63] He has vivified the body; He has entered the flesh and become the life.[64] Thus He is the kith and kin of all.[65]

IX

NATURE AND WORSHIP :

We have referred to the '*Aṣṭamūrta*' of our God which our poet mentions often.[66] The conception of this *Aṣṭamūrta* is according to *Tamiḻ* epic *Maṇimēkalai*, the quintessence of *Śaivism*;[66a] therefore, this becomes important in our study of *Ārūrar's Śaivism*. Nature is the form of the Lord to be worshipped: "*Tāṉalātu ulakamillai*"[67] is indeed true. The kingdom of God is not only inside our soul but also there before us in the form of this world wherein we play on the lap of Mother *Umā*. The Lord teaches us as this great Mother: "*Kaṟpaṉai kaṟpitta kaṭavuḷ.*"[68] Thanks to His Grace, we begin to contemplate and imagine His form as best as we can and though all these symbols and images are as nothing compared to Him, He at once enters and expands in the mind thus contemplating on Him—"*Pāvippār maṉam pāvikkoṇṭāṉ*".[69]

60. 7:70:10.
61. 7:12:2.
62. 7:2:2.
63. 7:72:10.
64. 7:88:3.
65. 7:97:1.
66. 7:1:7; 7:9:3; 7:16:7; 7:27:8; 7:28:6; 7:30:2; 7:30:3; 7:40:4; 7:47:8; 7:59:2; 7:62:6; 7:68:3; 7:80:8; 7:83:5; 7:86:6; 7:96:8.

66a. *Ch.* 29, *ll.* 89-95.

67. *Ap.*, 40:1.
68. 7:58:2.
69. 7:57:2.

Nature is looked upon as the very form of Godhead worshipped by our poet. *Ciparppatam* mountain is to *Ārūrar* the very Lord and our poet describes the mountain in his *hymn*[70] therefore without speaking of the Lord. Our poet is speaking also of *Veḷḷaṭai*[71] in similar terms. The description of the mountain scenes of *Ciparppatam* assumes therefore a great significance.

Śāṇḍilya Sūtra compares the creation proceeding from God with the creation of poetry or any work of art proceeding from the imagination of the poet or artist. This gives us a better understanding of the poetry of our saint. We have a picture of idealized or deified love, the very essence of Godhead. This world is a world of love, the happy family of all beings, the very heaven on earth and this reminds us of the social aspect of *Ārūrar's* religion where the soul is another form of God. A verse in *Śaivasamayaneṟi* explains why we would love our neighbours as ourselves: "Every living being is the form of the Lord. Realizing this, love all living beings. The love of men or followers of the Lord, is more important than the love of the Lord. This is what is called the cult of *Aṭiyārs* or *Bhaktas.* The heart of *Ārūrar* beats in unison with the hearts of the suffering humanity. This is the motive force of the various *hymns* addressed to the world at large. We have noticed that the pure soul of his, oftentimes so identifies with the sinners and the deluded, that he feels their faults are his, and cries to the Lord in repentance for all.

To our poet, Nature is the beautiful form of the Lord. This has been explained in detail in our study of the mystic value of the *hymns.* We saw *Appar* asserting that God has no form other than that of the Mother Goddess *Umā,* which we know is the embodiment of *Aruḷ* or Grace and that God has no garment other than this world which therefore is the form of the Mother or Grace.[72] *Ārūrar* continuing this tradition speaks of God adorning Himself with *'Aruḷ'* of no misery — *"Allalil aruḷē puṉaivāṉ".*[73] (There is another reading *'purivāṉ'* instead of *'puṉaivāṉ'*). He is the very form of this universe — *'aṇḍā'.*[74] He is the male and

70. *No.* 79.
71. 7:29.
72. 7:40:9.
73. 7:56:3.
74. 7:3:8.

the female and all forms.[75] He is himself the father and mother of all the living beings and He is their chief.[76] He has become Himself all the forms.[77] He is the male, the female and the neuter, but His form is not born.[78] Sometimes, as we have often pointed out, our poet sees the Lord as the pure form reflected in nature. At other times, nature appears to our poet as worshipping the Lord very much like himself. We know of his vision of the world as a *Gurukula.* He sees the same picture in nature where the rivers, mountains, trees, animals, elephants, monkeys and bees circumambulate, worship and sing the glories of the Lord and where the parrots recite the *Vēdas.* Even inanimate works of men like ships worship Him. In all these places, one feels, that he is identifying himself with these comrades in worship, of whom he seems to be proud. The children, the crabs and the bees all round, all remind him of the glory of the Lord as much as the majestic sea and the terrific flood. Art also becomes a part of nature and he sees the beauty of the Lord in the *gōpurams* adorning themselves with the crescent moon attaining, as it were, *Sārūpya.* Music, dance and poetry are all forms of the Lord who is Himself an artist.

X

UNIVERSALISM :

The universal love of our poet may be better understood by our realizing the wide scope of his poetic interest which sees Beauty everywhere. A list of the *flora* and *fauna* of his poetry will help us here. The various kinds of bamboos, the sugar-cane, the various kinds of paddy and grains, the cocoanut, the arecanut, the palmyra and the varieties of the plantains are often found mentioned along with the aloe, the sandal, the mango, the *vēṅkai,* the *kōṅku,* the *puṉṉai,* the *ñālal,* various kinds of the jack tree, the *marā,* the *vaṉṉi,* the *kaḷḷi,* the *marutam,* the *ātti* and the *takaram.* *Ēlam* (cardamom), *ilavaṅkam* (clove), *takkōlam, iñci* (ginger), *miḷaku* and *kaṟi* (pepper varieties) are his favourites as much as the *kaṉṭal, muṉṭal* and the *muñci* grass. Some of these are food like paddy, others are famous for their fragrance, still others for

75. 7:3:9.
76. 7:53:3; 7:75:4.
77. 7:40:9.
78. 7:28:6.

the shade, many more for their fruits, a few others for their flowers and a fewer still for their spices.

The heaven of poets is the heaven of flowers and our poet refers to the blooming *kōṅku, vēṅkai, puṉṉai, kurā, makiḻ (vakuḷam)*, *kullai, kuruntam, koṉṟai, cerunti, mallikai, mullai, mavval, mātavi, kurukkatti, ceṇpakam* and the varieties of the sword flower, *tāḻai, kaitai* and *kētakai,* sometimes losing himself in the contemplation of the beauty of the metamorphoses of their bud into flower and fruit.

The beautiful water flowers of all varieties whose distinctions the later generations have forgotten occupy in our poet the unique position of beauty—*karuṅkuvaḷai, ceṇkuvaḷai, kaḻunīr, ceṇkaḻunīr, kāvi, neytal, nīlam, centāmarai, puṇṭarīkam, kamalam, aravintam, paṅkayam, muṇṭakam, alli* (*āmpal, pāṉal*).

The floods of the *Kāviri, Maṇṇi, Koḷḷiṭam, Pālāṟu, Ciṟṟāṟu, Muttāṟu* and *Nīvā* rush down to carry spices, fruits, fragrant wood, yak tail, and elephant tusk, precious stones, pearls, coral and gold with bees, conches and fish to enrich the country.

The favourite birds of our poet are not only the *koel,* the peacock, the dove, the parrot, but also the owl, the crow, the wild cock and generally all the birds, the *kuruvi.* The water birds have the beauty of their own and our poet refers to *kuruku, veṇkuruku, nārai, aṉṉam* and *aṉṟil* (is it a water bird?) which abound in the fertile lands enriched by the floods.

Amongst the insects the bee is the highly popular one with our poets, more attractive to them than the birds. The six-legged (*aṟupatam*) which is the characteristic feature of all insects, is reserved for the bees by the poets and people of this country. The loving eye of the poet distinguishes a variety among these — *vaṇṭu, tēṉvaṇṭu, ñimiṟu, curumpu, aḷi* and he notes their life of love with reference to *kāḷai vaṇṭu* and *peṭai vaṇṭu* and loses his heart in their hum and dance round the nectar of flowers (*āṭal aḷi*). Even the tiny fly does not escape the keen and loving attention of our poet (*īntu*). The monkeys — our poet mentions a variety of them, *mucu, mucukkalai, kuraṅku, kulaikkuruṅku, kaṭuvaṉ, manti* and enjoys their life of love and looks upon their pranks as a dance — the dark buffalo, the crow, and the bull, the loving couple of elephants, the must elephant, and the varieties of deer — *pulvāy, kalai, puḷḷimāṉ, marai,* the boar — occupy the happy land of our

poet. He mentions the *āḷi,* perhaps in the sense of a lion; for, otherwise it is a fabulous animal. The floods carry though not the yak, its tail. The fox intensifies the desolation of the graveyard.

The fish, moving, jumping and darting in the rushing flood and in the sleeping ponds are glimpses of divine beauty to the poet; *vāḷai, ceṅkayal* are his favourites with the *varāl* (the *vari varāl*) *cēl, keṇṭai* and *malaṅku* (serpent fish) occupying the next place in his heart. The *'cuṟā'* or the shark is also mentioned; so is *makaram.* It is not clear whether it means the crocodile or the shark itself or the fabulous *makaram* so beautifully conceived and chiselled out by the sculptors of the time of *Ārūrar.* The crabs, their movement, their appearance and their variety, *naṇṭu, puḷḷi naḷḷi* and *alavaṉ* have all attracted his attention along with the sacred conches *ippi, caṅku, mukaram, valampuri, calañcalam,* pearls, *taraḷam, muttam, nittilam,* and coral-reefs described as coral creepers (*pavaḷakkoṭi*) are all carried in the floods, with gold and gems together with peacock feathers and yak tails and elephant tusks.

CHAPTER II

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE DRAMA OF CREATION

I

THEORIES ON TIME:

The world is space-time-cause. *Tolkāppiyam* speaks of the world as the basis for all acts, being characterized by space and time.[1] Space makes possible co-existence; and time introduces sequence wherein our feeling of uniformity of nature takes this sequence for consequence or cause and effect. The whole drama thus starts. The great magician, or Lord, God, wonderfully becomes all these and the actor and the background. He is not these but He has become all of them. He is the '*adhiṣṭāna*' or the basis and the words '*āki*'[2] and '*āy*'[3] bring out this truth. Amongst the many things the Lord becomes, we have found mentioned the Sun and the Moon. These, as universal clocks, measure time — time cannot be measured otherwise because it cannot be spread out as space. Therefore, resort is made to signs or marks in space like the moving Sun, like the hands of the clock (This is what the old *Tamil* commentators term '*cārttiyalattal*'). He is also the alternating day and night, the darkness and the light, the smaller units of time, measuring time as well as the lives of the living beings, cooking, to use the phrase of the *Upaniṣad,* everything and making possible the history of the universe.

'*Maitrīyupaniṣad*' speaks of the two forms of the *Brahman,* the time and the timeless; that which begins with the Sun, and that which is prior to the Sun; that which has parts and that which has no parts.[4] It is the timeless that has become the time. Our poet speaks of the Lord as standing as the time and the Sun.[5] It either means that He is the time and its measurer or better that He is the eternal time, the '*akṣayakāla*' of the *Gītā*[6] and the

1. 3:1:14.
2. 7:19:9.
3. 7:40:2.
4. *vi.* 15.
5. 7:19:9.
6. 10:33.

fleeting time represented by the Sun with whom begins time of parts.

Varied are the theories about time. Physical time of the mathematicians is relative and differs according to the velocity of the particular system of reference in the space time continuum. The psychological time, which is also that of the grammarian, speaks of the past, the present and the future. To some, the past is real and to others the future alone is real, while to the third the present alone exists. Psychological time as duration is relative to our mental condition appearing long in retrospect if it had been pleasant, short in retrospect if it had been unpleasant. As for the philosophers' conception of time they never agree: Kant and others speak of time as the pure form of our sensuous intuition. To Bergson, time is not the spatialized time we talk of, but the *la-duree,* a ceaseless flow — the integral unity, the only real, the Becoming of all things. To Alexander, time is the mind of space and space is the body of time and the Deity has to emerge out of the womb of these. To Bradley, it is an appearance, though it must somehow belong to the Absolute. He points out the perpetual puzzle of time: "If you take time as a relation between units without duration, then the whole time has no duration, and is not time at all. But, if you give duration to the whole time, then at once the units themselves are found to possess it; and they thus cease to be units. Time in fact is 'before' and 'after' in one; and without this diversity, it is not time. But these differences cannot be asserted of the unity; and on the other hand and failing that, time is helplessly dissolved".[7] This reminds us of the Theory of Indetermination in the Modern Physics of the Atom.

To the *Buddhists,* time is a form contributed by the mind and not a constituent of the world. To the *Nyāya-Vaisēṣika* schools, it is real being, one of the *dravyas.* If it is this insoluble puzzle which makes Alice observe, "I think you might do something better with the Time than waste it asking riddles with no answers".

To the mystics, it is the *Māyā* of the Lord. To them *Māyā* is not illusion but the inexpressible art and play of the

7. *Appearance and Reality, p.* 39.

'Citśakti', all intended to save the soul, to attract and educate it so as to become one with the Lord. In view of this perpetual puzzle of time, it is looked upon sometimes as the great magician, or the *Brahman*, to be contemplated upon for achieving salvation and freedom from Time and therefore the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* assures us *"Yah kālam Brahma iti upasīta, kālah tasya atidūram apasarati"* — 'From him who worships time as *Brahman* time runs away too far'.

There is a school of thought amongst Indian Philosophers; they are the *'Kālavādins'* who look upon the Absolute as time and this school is found explained in the *Tamil* Anthology *Peruntiraṭṭu* under *Kālavādam.* This is criticized in the *Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad* itself. Therefore *Upaniṣad Vidyā* of contemplating on Time as a symbol of *Brahman* is different from this *Kālavāda.*

II

THE ĀGAMIC THEORY:

Ārūrar in addition to the reference to the *Vēdas* which must include in the context, the *Upaniṣads,* speaks also of *Āgamas* referring to God as He who blesses the followers of *Āgamic* conduct. *"Ammāṉē ākamacilark karuḷ nalkum tammāṉē"*.[8] Therefore, the *Āgamic* theory of time may be referred to here. There are two schools of *Āgamic* thought: one, which looks upon this universe as being evolved as the play of His *'Citśaktī'* and which therefore ultimately believes in monism; the other which looks upon the universe as being evolved out of *Māyā* which is considered a separate category as real as God Himself. But, both of them agree in the main about the various stages of this evolution. God thinks of evolution and there develops a stress within the matrix or *Māyā* which begins thereby to vibrate. Evolution thus starts; knowledge, will or desire and activity arise and there come the first five stages, according to the different proportions of these *śaktīs.* These five are beyond time and therefore called eternal.[9] These are the *Śuddha* or pure *tattvas.* The 24 *tattvas* of the *Sāṅkhyas* are the impure *tattvas* forming the end of this evolution. In between these two, the pure and the impure, occur the seven *tattvas,* called *Śuddhāśuddha* (Pure-impure) *tattvas.* These

8. 7:96:6.
9. *Śivajñāna Cittiyar, Sūt.* 1:66.

seven and the other 24 are not called eternal for they are all in time. Of these seven, the first to be evolved is Time itself. Next comes *'Niyati'* or order to determine activity; it introduces the uniformity of Nature, the causal law. *Kāla,* which is next evolved, removes the darkness of *Āṇava* in which the soul is enshrouded revealing thereby the latter's power of activity, *Vidyātattva,* evolved next, reveals the soul's power of knowledge. *Rāgatattva,* which follows, kindles in the souls a desire for enjoyment, according to their respective *karma.* When this scheme is thus prepared the soul is generally ready for its entrance into specific bodies to start on its individual history when the 24 *aśuddha tattvas* are evolved for building up its body. *Ārūrar* speaks of 96 elements, which are the finished products which make up this body.[10] The 96 elements or *tattvas* are: *Āṉma tattvam* — 24; *Nāḍi* — 10; *Avastā* — 5; *Malam* — 3; *Guṇam* — 3; *Maṇḍalam* — 3; *Piṇi* — 3; *Vikāram* — 8; *Ādhāram* — 6; *Dhātu* — 7; *Marapu* — 10; *Kōcam* — 5; *Vāyil* — 9.

III

ĀRŪRAR ON TIME :

Therefore, when the world is mentioned by our poet who may be taken to have known this *Āgamic* scheme, we may take it as referring to the frame work of this space, time and causality all referring to the wonderful play of magician, the Lord. Our poet often speaks of *'Māyam',* when referring to the Universe and its life; the life is *'māyam'.*[11] *'Māyam'* is not mere illusion though our poet uses it in that sense as well, but more often it probably refers to the magic of the Lord, the creative genius working wonders. Therefore, in other places, our poet addresses the Lord as *'Arputaṉ'.*[11a] *Māyaṉ* has been used for describing *Viṣṇu.* Even as *Kṛṣṇa* is spoken of as the 'Cheat', *Śiva* also is addressed by our poet as *'Paṭiṟaṉ'* — the Cheat.[12] It is the wonder where contradictions are resolved; that is the wonder of wonders. Even *Śaṅkara* accepts the universe as real as against the *Buddhists* but according to him it is relatively real being transcended rather than negatived by the Absolute. *Śaṅkara* even speaks of the Lord

10. 7:8:3.
11. 7:56:8; 7:78:1; 7:95:7.
11a. 7:20:3.
12. 7:86:7

appearing as though a man for blessing the world: *"Dēhavān iva jāta iva sa Lōkānugraham kurvan lakṣyatē"* in explaining the conception of incarnation in his commentary on the *Gītā.*

Our poet refers to the Lord being the Time,[13] both as Before and After-relation and as Past, Present and Future. He is Tomorrow, Today and Yesterday,[14] the day and night,[15] the daylight and darkness.[16] The Lord is not within Time. Therefore, there is no Before or After, no beginning or no end,[17] or to say the same thing, "He is the Before and the After".[18] He has become the Beginning and the End.[19] These terms *'Mun, Pin'* may refer to space and time. He is one whole infinite — *Ananta.* It is impossible to know His beginning.[20] He transcends all causes. He is the beginning, the womb of all.[21] He is the beginning of everything,[22] but His beginning is not known. He never dies or He is never born, and He never grows old[23] unlike others placed on this sharp edge of the sword of fire called Day, cutting and cooking them all. The Lord is beyond Time and that is the significance of the *purāṇic* story of the Lord as *Kālakāla* destroying *Kāla* or Death for the sake of *Mārkkaṇḍa.* Our poet suggests that the Lord will do the same for all his followers.[24] The conception of *Kālakāla,* according to the *Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad* reveals the delusion of those men who think of Time as the cause of creation. This *Upaniṣad* explains the theory that the entire world is eternally enveloped by *Śiva* who is *Kālakāla* and who is of the nature of consciousness.[25]

The *Maitrī Upaniṣad* refers to an ancient old verse :

" 'Tis Time that cooks created things,
All things, indeed, in the Great Soul (*mahātman*)

13. 7:19:9.
14. 7:40:3.
15. 7:2:10.
16. 7:59:10; 7:59:3.
17. 7:44:7.
18. 7:77:6.
19. 7:92:4.
20. 7:57:3.
21. 7:12:3.
22. 7:64:3.
23. 7:18:1.
24. 7:55:1.
25. vi. 1, 2.

In what, however, Time is cooked —
Who knows that, he the *Vēda* knows."[26]

Time itself is cooked and swallowed away. The *Kathōpaniṣad* speaks of the creation becoming the food of the *Brahman* where *Kāla* is the *'upasēcana'*. The Lord for saving the soul appears within the frame of space and time and He is realized by the soul in and through time through all forms of God in which He is incarnating Himself as Beauty in Nature and Art and as *Guru* in Man, He being always inside the sacred temple of the hearts of the souls even as He is inside all Nature. The whole evolution is sometimes explained as the significance of the story of *Dasāvatāra* and *Māṇikkavācakar* speaks of the soul taking the forms of various living beings described by our modern evolutionists.[27] But *Ārūrar* in speaking of the *Aṣṭamūrta* is really speaking of every soul being the Temple of God, *Brahmapuri* and not of any particular history.

IV

PURPOSE OF CREATION :

The purpose of this divine play of creation where the formless assumes form is as already stated the salvation of the soul. We have referred to this, from the point of the Lord entering the soul to save it.[28] We can now refer to the creation in its march, through time, to the timeless salvation. Out of pity for the souls tossed about in the ocean of *karma,* the Lord has blessed them with salvation and increase[28a] (which remind us of the *'srēyas* and *prēyas'* of the *Upaniṣads*). The soul has to go through the various experiences of the world to be purified for ultimately hankering after the Lord. As already pointed out, "the Lord exhibits His magic, making us realize our birth when He inspires us to experience the mind which never forgets Him, for all of which He gives us this body, so that those who contemplate on Him with their mind, as the One ever remaining in their eye, may see Him He has entered this world as one inside this earth".[29] Beautiful nature, wherein the *purāṇic* Lord of mystic glory presides enabling the soul to attain salvation is described in a verse by our poet

26. *R. E. Hume, op. cit., p.* 434.
27. *Tiruvācakam* : *Civapurāṇam—ll,* 26-31.
28. 7:21:3.
28a. Promotion — *'Vīṭupēṟu* and *ākkam'* — 7:38:7.
29. 7:95:7.

wherein he rolls together the beautiful nature, the *purāṇic* personality of the Lord and the historic march towards salvation. "It is the beautiful spot where the *koel* sings in the midst of creepers; it is the beautiful spot where the peacocks dance; it is the beautiful spot of the Lord who had swallowed the poison; it is the beautiful spot where the *karmas* cease; it is the beautiful spot where the wealth of *mōkṣa* is gained; it is the beautiful spot of the damsel of Grace".[30] Our poet describes the way of the Lord in another verse: "He blesses us with gold and reality. He makes us enjoy the happiness of the world and the bliss of salvation (*tiru*). Then he pardons the excesses. He makes us submit to Him so that all the sins may fly away. Ah! He is one who cannot be known categorically. But He is our Father".[31] The poet therefore asserts, "He is concentrating Himself determined to give salvation" — *"Muttikku oṉṟiṉāṉ"*.[32]

Our poet speaks of the Lord as '*Ūḻi*'[33] or the aeons, the Lord becoming the aeons.[34] The significance of this conception of aeons is very well brought out in the following passage :

"It is remarkable that in an age when the rest of the world had made little history, the seers of India could imagine long stretches of time, extending over millions of years. The theory of the four ages (*catur-yuga*) does not mean that the time-process is cyclical, but rather that it is like a spiral. Nor does it mean that the four *yugas* should necessarily succeed one another. All the ages are all the time there. And, the progress of the world implies that *Kali, Dvāpara,* and the *Trēta* should to a greater and greater extent, get sublimated in *Kṛta-yuga. Kṛta* in the terminology of the game of dice is the highest throw which includes all the others. *Kṛta-yuga,* also called *Satya-yuga,* thus means the whole age, of which the others are but parts and distortions. It is towards this age that the entire creation is moving. It is the age of Truth, Peace, and Harmony. I think that the world is moving towards peace, *i.e., Ahimsā.* The way of violence has been tried for ages and has been found wanting": Thus wrote *Mahatma Gandhi* declaring his faith in cosmic progress.

30. 7:10:3.
31. 7:59:1.
32. 7:62:5.
33. 7:50:6.
34. 7:40:2.

He had also the vision to see that India has a major contribution to make towards world-welfare, and led her through the gates of freedom by the novel strategy of peace and love. "I do believe", he said, "that if India has patience enough to go through the fire of suffering, and to resist any unlawful encroachment upon its own civilization which, imperfect though it undoubtedly is, has hitherto stood the ravages of time, she can make a lasting contribution to the peace and solid progress of the world". Now that India has, under the guidance of the *Mahatma,* passed through the fire of suffering, the stage is set for her to march along the road to world-perfection. She has a primary part to play in the great cosmic drama of Time whose sole purpose is to unveil the face of Eternity, to usher in the *satyayuga.*[35]

The truth of this statement about this cosmic drama of the alchemy of soul-making is well brought out by the following line of *Ārūrar*: "This is the beautiful spot where He is contemplated with a firm resolve for many aeons for achieving salvation".[36]

It is significant that the poet speaks of the Lord becoming aeons being at the same time our kith and kin: *"Uṟavum ūḻiyum āya Perumāṉ".*[37] These words suggest that all this march of aeons is for the benefit of us all so that we may become one with Him and His eternal bliss.

V

THE MOMENTARY AND THE ETERNITY — PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY :

Our poet speaks at times of his experience of the Lord as occurring on one particular day. The experience which occurs is eternal though the realization, because of the exigencies of our speech, is to be referred within the time order without which no worldly speech is possible. That is the case with all mystics. Vaughan is describing his experience of eternity in the following lines :

"I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright;

35. Time and the Timeless by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, 'Principal Miller Lectures', 1953, pp. 82-84.
36. 7:10:10.
37. 7:50:6.

All round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres
Like a vast shadow moved; in which the world
And all her train were hurled."

Here he remembers it as an occurrence of the other night even as our poet speaks of it as occurring on one particular day.[38] Therefore, the Nobel Poet Laureate T. S. Eliot speaks thus:

"To apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time is an occupation for the saint."

That moment of intersection is really eternal, though it has to be expressed to us in our language as a point of time. Our poet speaks of the Lord as the eternity of the music of the harp thus helping us to realize the eternity or the Timeless though experienced in this world as a point of time even as we experience the eternal music or art in a moment and lose ourselves in eternity.[39]

The significance of this conception of time or the Philosophy of history is brought out in the passages given in the note below:

NOTE:

Eternal Life:

"The rapture of unitive life here is momentary and is only a foretaste of the eternal bliss Beyond. Time is a rapid succession of events, physical and psychical, and is a fleeting flux without any fixity or stability. It is particular and perishing as the past is past and the present glides away and the future is yet to be. Time as an endless series is self-contradictory as it implies continuity and discontinuity. The past, the present and the future are disparate as the past is only retrospected, the present is actual and the future is anticipated and yet the past flows into the present and the present glides into the future without any break or bar. Endless duration is thus self-discrepant and it is the bad infinite. Some say that space-time is real and that the self and deity emerge later on. Others divinize time. It is not the specious present or *totem simul* or the willed change. Time is not being

38. 7:2:5; 7:17:9.
39. 7:6:7.

and becoming since static existence is as unthinkable as perpetual or infinite motion. History as a connected record of events in time given in sense-perception is midway between sense-perception which deals with particular events and philosophy which deals with truth which is true at all times and in all places and to all persons. While some think apocalyptically of continuous progress, the good time that is coming and the golden age of the advent of God's kingdom in the future, others refer to the golden age in the past. Still others are pessimistic as they refer to a gradual deterioration of life or regress and impending gloom. Still others feel that the world is like a dog's curly tail which neither progresses nor declines and think of cycles. Still others think that the universe contains many possibilities and the present order is the one actualized by the creative will of God as His play. But the mystic experience is different from all these diagrams and dialectic descriptions of the mere speculative philosopher. The mystic's intuition of *Brahman* exceeds the limitations of space-time-cause and the map-making intellect and it is immutable and eternal. The *pariṇāmic* process of *prakṛti* and the contractions of *karma* are transfigured and transcended in the Eternal. But *prakṛti* and the Self are not destroyed or devoured by the *Absolute.* They are not sterilized or sublated as, to the mystic seer, time is a moving image of eternity or, as the eternal, in and beyond the temporal. *Brahman* is the home of the eternal perfections of truth, goodness and beauty and the mystic ascends gloriously by the straight and shining pathway of the gods to the Absolute or *Brahman* beyond. He goes from the temporal to the eternal, from darkness to light and from the immanent and infinite to the transcendental beyond all language and thought and enjoys the integral experience of *Brahman* (*paripūrṇa Brahmānubhava*). The attainment of the Absolute is the one aim of all mystics and it has its fruition in realizing *Brahman* in all beings and all beings in *Brahman* as the twin experiences of spirituality and service."[40]

The Philosophy of History :

"The philosophy of history brings out the possibility of universal salvation or *sarva mukti* and thus offers a corrective to subjectivism which may arise from immanental mysticism. The meaning of history is gradually unfolded as the revelation of the

40. *Mystics and Mysticism*, pp. 413-415.

eternal in the temporal. History chronicles, events given in sense-perception in the order in which they occur. In the scientific sense, sequence is explained as consequence and facts are explained in terms of cause and effect in a connected way as *karma*. But this view is mechanical as it does not reveal the inner purpose of historic events. History needs God as Providence who brings good out of evil and there is one increasing purpose running through the ages. But progress is often followed by regress and the natural order often conflicts with the moral order. Besides, God does not depend on man for the furtherance of His purpose. History is said to be stained with the blood of martyrs and the tragedies of unmerited suffering and there seems to be so much caprice and cruelty in the world that they shake one's faith in Providence and in the triumph of virtue. A higher view of history is that it refers to *Īśvara* as the moral Ruler who metes out justice impartially to everyone according to the merits of the *karma* of individuals. *Karma* has a twofold meaning, scientific and moral; in the former sense, it is the law of causality on the moral level; *Īśvara* metes out justice impartially to everyone according to his deserts, and the *jīva* alone is responsible for his deeds. In a higher sense, God's righteousness is rooted in redemption and *karma* has its fulfilment in *kṛpa* or Divine mercy. But it is difficult to decide whether Grace is the result of *karma* or is unconditioned and spontaneous. History finally marks the progress of soul-making by Divine Love and then the soul reunites with God and is made godly, leading to *sarvamukti* or universal salvability. The philosophy of history is the revelation of the Eternal in the temporal in the interests of the moulding of the mystic. To the mystic, becoming rests on the bosom of being in the Ocean Pacific of the All Self or *Vāsudēva.* As Milton says, Eternity greets our bliss with an individual kiss and by contacting God it is eternalized and no longer returns to mortality. Thus history starts with the temporal, then expounds the eternal in the temporal and is fulfilled in the vision of the eternal beyond the temporal".[41]

VI

THE GOLDEN AGE — PAST OR FUTURE :

In dealing with this question of time we may refer to the people who emphasize the importance of the Past. They swear

41. *Mystics and Mysticism,* pp. 373-375.

by the ancient tradition or '*Sampradāya*'. In so far as this school insists on the social side of the religious experience, it has a value provided it does not forget that salvation or *mōkṣa* it is beyond time from which there can be no return to the order of time. Our poet does not break away from the past tradition. He is using the old *purāṇic* stories for delivering his message. He refers to the *Āgamas* and *Vēdas* and the various kinds of worship prevalent in his age. But to him they are all the outward forms which become significant and important only when inspired with the love for God. He has in a sense revolutionized at least some of the stories, for instance, that of *Bhikṣāṭana*. There are others who expect the golden age, not in the Past but in the Future. They see a progress in the world and in the possibility of perfectability in man. If this is not a belief in the day of judgment, our poet also may be taken to belong to this school for along with other mystics, he believes in the universal salvation of all living beings. It is very difficult to say whether he believed that the history is a march of progress or decline or a wave with its crest and trough alternating, though he firmly believes in the ultimate purpose of all this universe is the salvation of all living beings. All our attempts are aimed at achieving happiness. Some think that it can be achieved in this very world. Others promise this happiness in a future world. Our poet speaks of '*Vāṉakam*' or the world of the *Dēvas* in terms of the tradition of his days. But that is only a reference and not his message. He is also believing in the possibility of this world being the seat of divine bliss. Has he not described this world as the very form of the Lord? But the '*Vīṭupēṟu*' which he speaks of is beyond Time and Space though he has necessarily to describe it in terms of space and time.

VII

OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM:

These remarks may suggest that our poet is an optimist. Man is after all an incorrigible optimist. But at least in some *hymns* there is a current of pessimism running through. The following references bring out the miseries of the world, the ocean of births and deaths, the beautiful ford of youth being washed away by the flood, the sensitive body unable to bear even the pressure of a grain, the sudden transformation of marriage festivity into a funeral mourning, the tyranny of the five high way robbers of our senses, the trap of death, the vily net spread out by deceitful women, the

heap of flesh and blood misnamed body, the thatched shed of a body built by nerves and bones, the unreliability of this world and its people, the declining life tapering into nothing in the end, the life of a dew-drop before the hot sun, the life of delusion, ignorance and sin which brings nothing but tears when one thinks of it.

NOTE :

They are quoted in original as their meaning has already been given.[42]

"Nalvā yilceytār naṭāntār uṭuttār naraittā rirantār enrunā nillattil
Collāyk kalikinratu" [43]

"Porivā yilivvain tinaiyu maviyap porutu" [44]

"Piravik kaṭalnīn tiyēri" [45]

"Ōṭupunar karaiyā milamai yuraṅki vilittā lokkumip piravi" [46]

"Pulanain tumayaṅ kiyakaṅ kulaiyap poruvē lornaman tamartām naliya
Alaman tumayaṅ kiyayar vatanmun"[47]

"Oru
Vālūnra varuntum uṭampitanai makilātu"[48]

"Maṇakkō lamatē piṇkkō lamatām piravi"[49]

"Vāṇār nutalār valaippat taṭiyēn"[50]

"Aivarkoṇtiṅ kāṭṭavāṭi ālkulippaṭ taluntuvēn"[51]

"Matta yānai yēri mannar cūla varuvīrkāl
Cetta pōti lāru millai"[52]

"Tōrra muṇṭēl maraṇa muṇṭu tuyara manai vālkkai
Mārra muṇṭēl vañca muṇṭu"[53]

42. *Vol. III.*
43. 7:3:1.
44. 7:3:2.
45. 7:3:3.
46. 7:3:4.
47. 7:3:5.
48 7:3:6.
49. 7:3:7.
50. 7:3:9.
51. 7:5:1.
52. 7:7:1.
53. 7:7:2.

"Ceṭiko ḷākkai ceṉṟu ceṉṟu tēyntollai vīḻāmuṉ
Vaṭikoḷ kaṇṇār vañcaṉaiyuṭ paṭṭu mayaṅkātē"[54]

"Vāḻvar kaṇṭīr nammu ḷaivar vañca maṉattīrē
Yāva rālu mikaḻappaṭṭiṅ kallalil vīḻātē"[55]

"Arittu nammē laivar vantiṅ kāṟalaippāṉ poruṭṭāl
Ciritta palvāy veṇṭalaipō yūrppuṟañ cērāmuṉ"[56]

"Poyyar kaṇṭīr vāḻkkai yāḷar pottaṭaippaṉ poruṭṭāl
Maiyal koṇṭīr"[57]

"Kūca nīkkik kuṟṟa nīkkic ceṟṟamaṉa nīkki
Vāca malku kuḻali ṉārkaḷ vañcamaṉai vāḻkkai
Ācai nīkki"[58]

"Iṉpa muṇṭēl tuṉpamuṇṭu ēḻaimaṉai vāḻkkai"[59]

"Tantai yārum tavvai yārum eṭṭuṉaic cārvākār
Vantu nammō ṭuḷḷalāvi vāṉaneṟi kāṭṭum
Cintaiyīrē neñciṉīrē"[60]

"Iṟaikaḻo ṭicainta iṉpam iṉpatto ṭicainta vāḻvu
Paṟaikiḻit taṉaiya pōrvai"[61]

"Ūṉmicai yutirak kuppai yoruporu ḷilāta māyam
Māṉmaṟit taṉaiya nōkka maṭantaimār matikku minta
Māṉuṭap piṟavi"[62]

"Aṟupatum pattu meṭṭu māṟiṉo ṭañcu nāṉkum
Tuṟupaṟit taṉaiya nōkkic colliṟṟoṉ ṟākac collār"[63]

"Colliṭi lellai yillai cuvaiyilāp pētai vāḻvu
Nallatōr kūṟai pukku nalamika aṟintē nallēṉ"[64]

"Narampiṉō telumpu kaṭṭi nacaiyiṉō ṭicaivoṉ ṟillāk
Kurampaivāyk kuṭiyi runtu"[65]

"Maṉameṉa makiḻvar muṉṉē makkaḷtāy tantai cuṟṟam
Piṇameṉac cuṭuvar pērttē piṟaviyai vēṇṭēṉ"[66]

54. 7:7:3.
55. 7:7:4.
56. 7:7:5.
57. 7:7:6.
58. 7:7:7.
59. 7:7:8.
60. 7:7:9.
61. 7:8:1.
62. 7:8:2.
63. 7:8:3.
64. 7:8:4.
65. 7:8:5.
66. 7:8:6.

"Tālveṉum taṉmai viṭṭut taṉattaiyē maṉattil vaittu
Vālvatē karutit toṇṭar maṟumaikkoṉ ṟiyakillār
Ālkuḻip paṭṭa pōtu alakkaṇil oruvarkkāvar"[67]

"Utiranīr iṟaiccik kuppai eṭuttatu malakkuk kaimēl
Varuvatōr māyak kūṟai"[68]

"Poyttaṉmait tāya māyap pōrvaiyai meyyeṉ ṟeṇṇum
Vittakat tāya vāḻvu"[69]

"Māṉuṭa vāḻkkaiyoṉ ṟākak karutiṭiṟ kaṇṇīr pilkum"[70]

"Emmāṉ emmaṉaiyeṉ ṟeṉak keṭṭaṉaic cārvākār
Immā yappiṟavi piṟan tēyiṟan teyttoḻintēṉ"[71]

"Patiyum cuṟṟamum peṟṟamakkaḷum paṇṭai yāralar peṇṭirum
Nitiyi limmaṉai vāḻum vāḻkkaiyum niṉaippoḻi"[72]

"Puṟanti raintu narampe ḻuntu naraittu nīyurai yāṟṟa ḻarnt
Taṟam purintu niṉaippa tāṉmai yaritukāṇ"[73]

"Paṭaiye lāmpaka ṭāra vāḻilum pavvañ cūḻntara cāḻilum
Kaṭaiye lāmpiṉait tēraivāl"[74]

"Tuñci yumpiṟan tuñci ṟantum tuyakka ṟāta mayakkivai"[75]

"Iṅkalakkum uṭarpiṟanta vaṟiviliyēṉ"[76]

"Poyyē ceytu puṟampuṟamē tirivēṉ taṉṉaip pōkāmē"[77]

"Maṟinēr oṇkaṉ maṭanallār valaiyiṟ paṭṭu matimayaṅki
Aṟivē yaḻintēṉ aiyāṉāṉ"[78]

"Vēlaṅkāṭu taṭaṅkaṇṇār valaiyuṭpaṭṭuṉ neṟimaṟantu
Mālaṅkāṭi maṟantoḻintēṉ"[79]

"Aḻukku mei"[80]

"Māṉai nōkkiyar kaṇvalaip paṭṭu varunti yāṉuṟṟa valviṉaik kañci"[81]

67. 7:8:7.
68. 7:8:8.
69. 7:8:9.
70. 7:15:8.
71. 7:24:3.
72. 7:35:2.
73. 7:35:3.
74. 7:35:6.
75. 7:35:10.
76. 7:51:3.
77. 7:52:2.
78. 7:52:4.
79. 7:52:5.
80. 7:54:1.
81. 7:54:6.

"Cetta pōtinilmun ninru nammaic cilarkaḷ kūṭic cirippatan munnam"[82]

"Poḷḷa livvuṭa laipporu ḷenru"[83]

"Kalutai kuṅkuman tāncuman teyttāl kaippar pālpuka marratupōlap
Palutu nānulan ruḷtaṭumārip paṭuculit talaip paṭṭanan"[84]

"Naraippu mūppoṭu piṇivarum innē nanriyil vinaiyē tuṇinteyttēn
Araitta mañcaḷa tāvatai yarintēn añcinēn namanāravar tammai"[85]

"Punnu naippani veṅkatir kaṇṭāl pōlum vālkkai kalintana nāḷum"[86]

"Muntic ceyvinai yimmaikkaṇ naliya mūrkka nakik kalintana kālam"[87]

"Cirucciri tēyirap pārkaṭ konriyēn"[88]

"Alippa raivar puravuṭai yārka ḷaiva rumpura vācara vāṇṭu
Kalittuk kārpeytu pōyina pinnaik kaṭaimu raiyunak kēporai yānēn
Vilittuk kaṇṭanan meypporuḷ tannai"[89]

"Karrilēn kalai kaḷpala ñānam"[90]

"Koṭukka kirrilēn oṇporuḷ tannaik kurrañ cerram ivaimutalāka
Viṭukka kirrilēn vēṭkaiyum cinamum vēṇṭil aimpula nenvaca malla
Naṭukka murratōr mūppuvan teyta naman ramarnara kattiṭal añci
Iṭukka ṇurranan uyvakai aruḷāy"[91]

"Aiva kaiyarai yarava rāki yāṭci koṇṭoru kālavar niṅkār"[92]

"Ēlai māṇuṭa inpinai nōkki yiḷaiya varvalaip paṭṭirun tinnam

82. 7:59:4.
83. 7:59:6.
84. 7:60:1.
85. 7:60:2.
86. 7:60:3.
87. 7:60:4.
88. 7:60:4.
89. 7:60:5.
90. 7:60:6.
91. 7:60:7.
92. 7:60:8.

Vāḻai tāṉpaḻuk kumnamak keṉṟu vañca valviṉai yuḷvalaip paṭṭuk
Kūḻai māntartañ celkatip pakkam pōka mumporu ḷoṉṟaṟiyāta ēḻai"[93]

"*Piṇikoḷ ākkai piṟappiṟap peṉṉum itaṉai nīkki*"[94]

"*Vaṭikoḷ kaṇṇiṇai maṭantaiyar tampāl mayala tuṟṟu vañcaṉaik kiṭāmāki*"[95]

"*Pāvamē purintu akaliṭan taṉṉil palapakarntala mantuyir vāḻkkaik*
Kāva veṉṟuḻan tayarntuvī ḻātē"[96]

"*Vāḻvāvatu māyammitu maṇṇāvatu tiṇṇam*
Pāḻpōvatu piṟavikkaṭal pacinōy ceyta paṟitāṉ
Tāḻātaṟam ceymmiṉ"[97]

"*Paṟiyē cuman tuḻalvīr paṟinari kīṟuva taṟiyīr*
Kuṟikūviya kūṟṟaṅkoḷu nāḷālaṟa muḷavē"[98]

"*Uḻakkē yuṇṭu paṭaittīṭ ṭivait tiḻappārkaḷum cilarkaḷ*
Vaḻakkē yeṉiṟ piḻaikkēm eṉpar matimāntiya māntar"[99]

"*Vāḻōṭiya taṭaṅkaṇṇiyar valaiyi laḻuntātē*
Nāḷōṭiya namaṉārtamar naṇukā muṉam"[100]

"*Potiyēcuman tuḻalvīr poti yavamāvatum aṟiyīr*
Matimāntiya vaḻiyēceṉṟu kuḻivīḻvatum viṉaiyāl"[101]

These references have been discussed in our studies of these *hymns*.[102]

All these, he speaks of with reference to those who become slaves of their passions. Sometimes he identifies himself with the suffering humanity and attributes all its evils to himself. But he points out that once people wake up from this sleep and dream they wake up into the bliss of God.[103] 'Where the fool sleeps the wise is wide awake and where the fool is wide awake the wise

93. 7:60:9.
94. 7:64:2.
95. 7:64:3.
96. 7:64:4.
97. 7:78:1.
98. 7:78:2.
99. 7:78:4.
100. 7:78:5.
101. 7:78:9.
102. Vol. III.
103. 7:60:5.

falls asleep': That is the message of the *Gītā*[104] and it is this our poet also hints at.

The fire which is meant for cooking is often used for destructive purposes for incendiarism by man. But that is not the fault of the fire. The world is neither good nor evil; it only reflects the moods of man using or living through it. As our poet says, it is a mixture of bitter margosa and sweet sugar-cane,[105] a mixture of pain and pleasure. To the right minded this world itself is the means to the end. This *saṁsāra cakra* or 'the wheel of life' is according to the *Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad* the wheel of *Brahman* or the *Brahma cakra* or as *Appar* has put it this world is the very form of the Mother.

How is this change of vision to be brought about? *Ārūrar's* words are, *"Ācai nīkki aṉpu cērtti"*.[106] The difference between the destructive and constructive attitudes is beautifully described by our poet in this phrase *"Ācai nīkki aṉpu cērtti"*. *'Ācai'* is an attachment, a slavery to the world and to the senses, all for self aggrandisement which leads only to restlessness of worldly misery, whilst *'Aṉpu'* is becoming one with the thing loved, surrendering the smaller self to the higher self whose form is Bliss. That is why the mystics denounce the sense pleasures or rather sublimate and transmute them into the eternal bliss of the Lord. Has not *Appar* given expression to this truth in the verse *"Mācil vīṇaiyum mālai matiyamum"?*[107] Has not *Ārūrar* spoken of the five senses being the very form of the Lord,[108] who becomes the experiences of these senses and their objects?[109] Therefore, what our poet preaches is not a philosophy of world and life negation but a philosophy of fulfilment and in that sense it is a philosophy of world and life affirmation. Our poet looks upon every thing in this world as the gift of God and he refers to Him for everything he wants. His wives were to him the gifts of God and as we have already pointed out even the happiness he enjoyed with *Caṅkili* is according to our poet the transmuted pleasure of *yōgic* bliss.[110]

104. 2:69.
105. 7:46:2.
106. 7:7:7.
107. 203:1.
108. 7:62:9.
109. 7:59:3.
110. 7:45:4.

Part II

SOUL

Introduction

In this part we take up *Ārurar's* conception of Soul or '*Ātman*' and its progress. The Nature of the soul is not discussed separately but is shown only as revealed by its spiritual progress. Describing the means of attaining salvation or freedom as a spiritual ladder is found in all mystic literatures. The conception of the mystics of the world is as usual taken as our starting point and correlated with the *Āgamic* conception which *Ārūrar* may be taken to have followed. *Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga* and *Jñāṇa* have been studied in our discussion of *Ārūrar's* religion. Therefore, the philosophical implications of these alone are explained in this part of our study within the background of rituals of other lands. *C̆ēkkiḻār's* conception of *Ārūrar's* married life as a spiritual *yōga* is also elucidated. The law of *Karma* becoming the law of love and Grace is also explained. The ethical mysticism of *Ārūrar* emphasizing the importance of the moral path is brought out thus exposing the hollowness of the view that *Ārūrar* and other mystics are non-moral if not immoral. The self-condemnation of *Ārūrar* is explained as a feeling of repentance and conversion rather than as confession of his moral depravity, a depravity which cannot be reconciled with the picture of a highly elevated moral life which the poet in all his sincerity places before his Lord in the isolation of his suffering and intimacy of his prayer. This alternating feelings of self-condemnation and self elation are explained as the ebb and flow of the loving heart. The spiritual process also becomes a process of love — a holy *tapas* as distinguished from '*ceṭit tavam*'[1] or vain torture. The doctrine of Grace which is one of the great messages of *Ārūrar's* poem is explained in the light of the law of *Karma* becoming the law of love, where the Lord as the lover of the beloved becomes the insatiable nectar of divine bliss. Thus is the way paved for discussing the final goal of divine bliss in terms of love.

1. 7:14:6.

CHAPTER I

THE LADDER OF LOVE AND ĀGAMIC WORSHIP

I

OUR POET'S METHOD:

We discussed *Ārūrar's* conception of the Universe or Nature, which is object to a subject. The subject is the spirit or soul. To start with, the souls are found to be many; they suffer from ignorance, misery of the cycle of births and deaths and are caught within the wheel of *karma.* The false identification with matter, under which the soul's *'Cit', 'Sat'* and *'Ānanda'* aspects are found cribbed, cabinned and confined, slowly ceases. The soul sees its true worth. It finds that the Soul of the soul is God within and without—the *Sat, Cit* and *Ānanda,* the ever existing Truth, the ever pure Knowledge and Pure Bliss, All Pervasive and Infinite. The soul realizes that its separatist tendency is egoism and therefore surrenders itself to the Lord or the Soul of the soul. It is lost there and experiences the Absolute. Instead of discussing the characteristics of these souls and God separately, our poet brings out their mutual relationship and gradual blossoming of the final bliss. We, therefore, follow our poet's method. Mystics speak like him of purgation, illumination and Bliss. As the attachment to the world becomes a force of habit and continues as such almost to the very end of *Śivadarśana,* purgation with consequent illumination may be looked upon as a stage in the spiritual progress.

II

THE TEN EFFECTS: *DAŚAKĀRYA OF ŚAIVISM*:

The mystics are blessed with the immediate experience of God. The *Śaivites* speak of ten stages of spiritual or mystic experience, as Ten Effects or *Daśakāryas.* The *Daśakāryas,* as explained in *Patipacupācavilakkam,* are as follows:

> *"Taraimutal nātamīrāit tanittanik kāntal rūpam*
> *Taraimutal nātamīrāit tarceyal kāntal kātci*
> *Taraimutal nātamīrāic catamayam enru kantu*
> *Kuruparan arulāl nīnkal cuttiyāyk kurittukkollē"* (1)

"Tattuvā tītamtaṉṉil cakacavā ṉavama lantāṉ
Uṟṟiṭum itaṟkuc cākki naṉeṉal uyirkku rūpam
Citturu ṉāṉē eṉṟu tēṟalē tericaṉantāṉ
Muṟṟuṇar īcaṉ muṉṉar mukiḻttiṭā taṭaṅkal cutti" (2)

"Eṅkaṇum civaṉu ḷāṉeṉ ṟuṇartalē iṟaivaṉ ṟūpam
Aṅkavaṉ toḻileṅ kaṇṇum aṟitalē terica ṉantāṉ
Tiṅkaḷvē ṉiyaṉō ṭoṉṟal civayōkam malarma ṉampōl
Puṅkaṉē yatta ḷuntal pōkameṉ ṟaṟaiyum nūlē" (3)

The first is *'Tattva rūpam'*, the knowledge of the world—a kind of indirect knowledge, a vague knowledge of its existence through cognition — not as a variety which we all experience but as a unity. This is followed by *'Tattva darśana'*, the experience of the world's inner nature where the soul realizes that its erstwhile identification with matter is but a vain delusion. Many play and die on the shore or on the surface. A few dive deep and plumb its depth and to these is vouchsafed this sight. There, man escapes from the evil clutches of the ghost or the misleading aspect of this world. Here arises the removal of the delusion of false identification with matter; here springs up the true knowledge of the real soul; here occurs the purification from the dirt of attachment and of identification with and contamination by the *tattvas* or matter: 'the *Tattva śuddhi'*. The experience here is no more on the lower level of animal sensation: it ceases to be mere physical pain and pleasure; it is no more ill balanced. The fissure in the mind cutting into two — the conscious and the unconscious begins to be cured. The basis of this Universe is found to rest elsewhere. Man turns inward. Pleasure is found not to exist outside.

'Ātma rūpam', the knowledge of the *Ātman*, the spirit or the soul, dawns on Man. It is really an understanding of God; because God and soul are inseparable, it is called *'Ātma rūpam'*. *'Ātma darśana'* which follows next is the direct self-realization and experience of the soul in complete self-surrender unto God, living, moving and having its being in God. This is the positive aspect, while the subsequent stage of *'Ātma śuddhi'* is the negative aspect. The outward darkness may disappear but unless the blindness of the eye also is cured there will not be any sight possible. Here comes the true dependence of the soul on God; real self-surrender springs up. Human feelings are controlled and stabilized; everything is

thus humanized and deified. There are no more inhibitions and exhibitions; the conscious and the unconscious are harmonized in the supra conscious. This harmony is the fruit, full of happiness. The feelings thus sublimated become the sentiments or the '*Rasas*' of Art. But even this is not felt to be self-supporting and independent. The basis is still found to be elsewhere but within. The fissure of the mind is cured but not as yet made whole. Man is there but on the circumference and he is slowly drawn to the centre. '*Ātma śuddhi*' follows, where this experience is transcended. The soul is lost in God; there is no more any sign of separatist tendency. The dirt of the separatist feeling is completely washed out. Hence the name of '*Ātma śuddhi*'.

This spiritual progress cannot be explained except through a parable. There are two birds, it is said, on the tree of life; one feasts on the sour unripe fruits and the sweet ripe fruits of that tree; the other bird stays perched up on the top of the tree far beyond this experience of misery and happiness; the lower bird slowly flies up and becomes one with the higher bird even as the reflection becomes one with the original when the medium of reflection is destroyed or withdrawn — thus is told in the *Upaniṣads* the story of the soul attaining its perfection in God or *Brahman*.

Here are distinguished three further stages: '*Śiva rūpam*' is the universal vision. The *Guru* or Master initiating the soul into the mysteries of mystic experience is looked upon as the loving God Himself and the soul sees God in everything and everywhere. The distinction between these two outlooks, the outlook on the Master and the outlook on the world, is this. God incarnates Himself in the spirit of the Master whilst He exists everywhere as the basis of everything because of His omnipresence in this universal vision. Then follows '*Śiva darśana*' which is the direct experience of God. The feet of God are realized when the soul is lost in Him and does not see itself separate in activity or experience. Then the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' die out and disappear. The face of the Lord is realized when all experience becomes the experience of the Lord and when there is no experience of any other kind. The crown of the Lord is realized when the consciousness of this experience is lost in the divine bliss of *Śiva*. Really '*Ātma darśana*', the experience of the reality of *Ātman* follows only when the *Śivarūpam* is realized, where the transcendent *ātman* is realized as the very *ātman* of the *ātmaśuddhi* stage and this happens only

when *Śivadarśana* is experienced.[1] *Jñānadṛṣṭi* is the soul-sight of God, but it is really *Brahmajñāna* where everything is seen as unity. There is then the overflow of superconscious into the core of our heart which overflows with love. '*Śivayōga*' or communion with *Śiva* is the next stage where the soul is oned with God. Finally this blossoms into the last stage of '*Śivabhōga*' or enjoyment or divine bliss. *Pati* is the conception of the Lord common to all. *Śiva* is the conception of God as the intimate lover of the beloved in union or identity. All these stages are not really successive; for purposes of classification, they have been thus distinguished. Some are aspects of one and the same stage. Some of them therefore may be looked upon as springing up simultaneously. In *Ātmarūpam* arise *Tattvarūpam* and *Tattvadarśanam*. In *Śivarūpam* arise *Tattvaśuddhi* and *Ātmadarśanam*. In *Śivadarśanam* occurs *Ātmaśuddhi* followed by *Śivayōga* and *Śivabhōga*.

III

SRI P. N. SRINIVASACHARI'S IDENTIFICATION:

Mystic experience starting as a feeling is thus sublimated; it becomes self-luminous. It is then a fulfilment of reason and thought, of feeling and emotion and of will and activity, all making for certainty and stability in the Reality. The *Jñāna Kriyā Icchāśaktīs* become perfect in the eternal values of Truth, Goodness and Beauty — *Satyam Jñānam Śivam Sundaram*. Intuition is creative art where you see the fruition of all reason, feeling and will. There is first equanimity or *Śāntabhāva*. Then follows hankering after God, that God intoxication which may be called *Prēma* of the *Madhura Bhāva* of clandestine love. *Bhakti* is *mukti* in that stage. This *Bhakti* is not the means but the end itself; it is *Parabhakti, i.e., Sādhya Bhakti* and not *Sādhana Bhakti* according to *Vaiṣṇavite* phraseology. There we see the valour of *Bhakti* where even *Mukti* is not sought for: "*Vīṭum vēṇṭā viṟal*" says *Cēkkiḻār*.[2] It is love for love's sake and not for anything else. *Brahmānubhava* alone remains. *Svarājya* is thus attained; it is perfection; it is a freedom from individuality; the finite becomes there the Infinite in all respects.

1. *Śivajñānabōdham, Śivajñāṉa Svamikaḷ Ciṟṟurai, Introduction to the 9th sūtra.*

2. *Periyapurāṇam, Tiṟukkūṭṭac ciṟappu, v. 8.*

The mystics all the world over speak of Purgation, Illumination and Ecstasy and Rapture of union or unity. Sri P. N. Srinivasachari identifies them with *Karma Jñāna Bhakti yōgas* of the *Gītā*.[3] The ten Effects or *Daśakārya* relate to these three grades of the experience—*Tattva, Ātman* and *Śiva* and these three grades may be seen as the three stages of Purgation, Illumination and Union.

IV

MYSTICS ELSEWHERE, IN THE LIGHT OF ŚAIVISM:

1. *Christians*

The Christians also speak of the three stages.[4] First comes psychological integration of the ego which is exterior. It relates to the *Tattvas.* Here we have the nature mystic. The second is the revelation of God to the soul; here, from nature, one goes to the super-nature; this is interior and relates to the *Ātman.* It may be noted that *Ātmadarśanam* follows only *Śivadarśanam* or revelation of God to the Soul. The third is the Super-essential where the Soul turns to God for the establishment of the kingdom of God by the communion of souls through knowledge. Is this not the vision of *Ārūrar* as portrayed in his *"Appālum aṭiccārntār"*? *Paṭṭiṉattār's* poem is interpreted by *Śivajñāna Yōgi* to mean this.[5] "The eye itself is light but it lies hidden till the self-luminous light comes in when the eye becomes a light. The eyes cannot see each other in the same way the eye sees the object. But when the eye sees the light it becomes one with the latter and experiences itself as the light. This is everybody's experience. The eye can experience other eyes in a similar way. In a similar way the souls which have no relationship in themselves individually become one with *Śiva* and then they experience themselves and other souls". This is the explanation *Śivajñāna Yōgi* gives for the lines occurring in *Paṭṭiṉattār*: "When I obtained your Grace, the fog of *Māyā* was torn asunder. I obtained *jñānadṛṣṭi.* I saw then, Your great Reality. Seeing that I saw myself and I saw others. Those who have not experienced you are those who have not experienced themselves".[6]

3. *Mystics and Mysticism* p. 72.
4. *Studies in the Psychology of the Mystics by Father Joseph Marechal, S.J., First edn., p.* 322.
5. *Śivajñāna bōdhacciṟṟurai Sūtram* 10, *Nāvalar* edition.
6. *Tiruviṭai Marutūr Mummaṇikkōvai.* 13:28-35.

But in *Śivabhōga* even this is transcended where we have the divine bliss without any feeling of duality. "All the activities of the world and its universal lords rise up from you as the waves do from the ocean and subside in you ebbing and flowing". — So sings *Paṭṭiṉattār*.[7] In another place he speaks of the varied beautiful paintings appearing as one with the wall to those who come near it and touch the wall.[8]

2. *Plotinus*

Plotinus speaks of all paths leading to the same goal which is above the actual and the particular. The goal is where we stand in the immediate presence of the infinite which shines out as from the deep of the soul. We saw *tattva* is transcended by the mystic and to some this itself may bring the experience of the Lord.[9] Plotinus speaks of the love of beauty as the path of the poet. Devotion to the One, which is real science, characterizes the philosopher and this second path of Plotinus answers to the *jñāna* which we found related to the *Ātmakāryas* of *Śaivites*. His third path is love and prayer of the devotee and this, therefore, may be identified with *Bhaktiyōga* and *Śivakāryas*.[10]

3. *Spinoza*

Spinoza's three ascending stages of perfection, *viz.*, sense knowledge, intellectual experience, and moral uplift based respectively on sense perception, reason and intuition, making a progress from sensuality (*tattva*) through spirituality (*Ātma*) to Godliness (*Śiva*) also correspond to our three stages.[11]

4. *Guru Nanak*

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism (1459-1538) speaks of five stages: (1) the *Dharukhand* or the Realm of Beauty which may stand for the first path of Plotinus; (2) *Jñānakhand*, the Realm of divine knowledge which answers to our *jñāna;* (3), (4) and (5) *viz.*, *Sharankhand*, *Kharankhand* and *Sachkhand* respectively, the Realm of ecstasy, the Realm of Power conquering the

7. *Oṟṟiyūr orupā orupatu*, 4:6-10.
8. *Tirukkaḻumala Mummaṇikkōvai*, 10:31-34.
9. *Śivajñānabōdhac ciṟṟuṟai*, p. 170.
10 See *Christian Mysticism by W. R. Inge, edn.* 1899, *p.* 91 *ff*.
11. *Ethic of Benedict De Spinoza, Part II, prop. XL, schol.* 2, *Part IV, prop. XX etc.*

fear of death and the Realm of union with God are really the three grades of *Bhakti,* where the knowledge becomes one with will and feeling to attain the fruition of the Divine Bliss of union.[12]

5. *St. John*

St. John (St. Juan) of the Cross speaks of the three dark nights of the spiritual progress — marking the transit from Nature to the soul, from soul to God and from separation from God to union with God. First is the dark night of sense and here the images of the mind or *vāsanas* fade away in prayer. In the second, the dark night of the spirit or faith, the soul is touched by Divine Grace. In the third night of the soul, there is the torpor of nihilism, where the soul suffers alone in its *kaivalya* hence hankering after union with God.[13]

6. *Sufis*

Sufis speak of four stages: (1) *Shari'at,* or the carrying out of the Islamic injunctions; (2) *Malakut* or introspection; (3) *Marifah* or attaining knowledge and (4) *Haquiqah* or the union with the All Self. The third and the fourth are the *Jñāna* and *Bhakti yōga,* when it will be clear that the first and second relate to the *Karma yōga* of purgation transcending the *tattvas.* They speak of the journey to God in three stages of self control, spiritual illumination and ecstasy of union.[14]

There are others who speak of the seven rungs of the ladder of Love; and Attar, the mystic poet of the Sufist (1140-1234) speaks of the seven valleys on our pilgrimage to the All-Self or Absolute— the valley of the quest, the valley of love, the valley of knowledge, the valley of detachment, the valley of unity, the valley of amazement, and the valley of annihilation of Self. The *Daśakāryas* are not all of them successive; some of them, as already pointed out, are simultaneous, for instance, *Śiva Rūpam* and *Ātmadarśana, Śivadarśana* and *Ātmaśuddhi.* If this is remembered, these valleys can be equated with the *Daśakāryas.*

These valleys are compared with the seven stages described by the Christians — purgation, illumination, contemplation, absorp-

12. See the *Sacred scripture of the Sikhs.*
13. *Christian Mysticism by W. R. Inge, pp.* 224-228.
14. *Islamic Sufism by Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah,* p. 294; See also *Comparative Mysticism, by Jacques de Marquette.*

tion in divine love, ecstasy, the Divine dark and merging in the ocean of Divine love.

John of Ruysbroek speaks in the treatise 'On the Seven Grades of Love', of these seven rungs of the ladder of love and inward life from, (1) goodwill; (2) voluntary poverty; (3) chastity; (4) humility; (5) desire for the glory of God; (6) Divine contemplation, which has three properties — intuition, purity of spirit and nudity of mind; to (7) the ineffable, unnameable transcendence of all knowledge and thought.[15]

St. Augustine, the greatest of the early Christian mystics, (354 A.D. - 430 A.D.) speaks of purgation, illumination and union and he describes this mystic way as ascending up to God as pure Beauty through seven stages — animation, good-will, introversion or entering into the soul, recollection or freedom from distracting thought, self-discipline, cleansing of the heart and contemplation on God.[16]

V

THE FOUR-FOLD PATH OF ĀGAMAS:

The *Āgamas* speak of the four-fold path of *Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga,* and *Jñāna.* It is important to note that in every one of these four, there are four further stages making in all sixteen — *Caryā* in *Caryā, Kriyā* in *Caryā, Yōga* in *Caryā* and *Jñāna* in *Caryā; Caryā* in *Kriyā, Kriyā* in *Kriyā, Yōga* in *Kriyā* and *Jñāna* in *Kriyā; Caryā* in *Yōga, Kriyā* in *Yōga, Yōga* in *Yōga* and *Jñāna* in *Yōga; Caryā* in *Jñāna, Kriyā* in *Jñāna, Yōga* in *Jñāna* and *Jñāna* in *Jñāna.*[17] This assumes that till one reaches the last stage there will occur in mixed forms when one has to distinguish them by the emphasis on the predominant element. Speaking roughly, *Caryā* may be spoken as service or physical activity; *Kriyā* is *bhāvanā* or mental activity — a play with God; *Yōga* is contemplation; *Jñāna* is realization.

They are described as the rising rungs of a ladder. Their significance is well brought out by their effects. *Caryā* leads to *Sālōkya; Kriyā,* to *Sāmīpya; Yōga,* to *Sārūpya; Jñāna* to *Sāyujya.* When man thinks of God, he enters his mental sphere of God in his activity in this world with the freedom of the servant moving

15. *Christian Mysticism by W. R. Inge, pp.* 168-169

16. See *"Western Mysticism" by Dom Cuthbert Butler, Second edition.* 1927, p. 37 and *Comparative Mysticism by J. D. Marquette, p.* 127.

17. *Śivajñāna pāṭiyam, p.* 470.

inside the home of the Lord. He has achieved *Sālōkya* — the sphere of God. He still moves about only in the circumference. He is engaged in *Dāsya mārga* or the path of Service. Gradually he is drawn to the centre, near unto God — *Sāmīpya*. He is engaged in the *Satputra mārga* — the path of the child and moves about with the freedom and right of a son. The vision appears only to disappear. He brings that back in his own imagination. This is still immature. He plays like a child but he plays the game of God. Imagination or *Bhāvanā* has its full swing. He worships God in various forms. The world and its objects become spiritualized in this play. *Pūjā* or worship follows. *Śuddhi* or purification occurs with various offerings to God. God incarnates Himself in Beauty and Images. The *Bhāvanā* is not, therefore, all noise and no meaning. Once man turns Godward, He rushes down and occupies his mind leaving room for nothing else. Man who has been identifying all along with matter and his body, feels he is not matter but spirit. He is the child of God, and, therefore, realizes his spiritual and divine form.

Sārūpya Yōga or contemplation of communion follows and the child's play becomes intense love for the Lord. An ethical life of self-control, service and love, a life of *Yama, Niyama* — control of senses and mind purifies the mind. Postures or *āsanas* do not form merely physical culture but because thought also plays a part in them, they become a mental culture where body and mind as an organic whole become controlled and integrated as a step towards higher perfection. *Prāṇāyāma* is the control of the wandering mind through the control of breath. If the outgoing tendency is arrested, mind turns inward to think on thought itself as *pratyāhāra*. The soul is no longer fettered by matter; and mind is withdrawn from the psychic plane; it concentrates on *Ātman,* that is *Dhāraṇā*. *Dhyāna* or mental retention and *samādhi* or spiritual unity follow. This is not enough. *Puruṣa* or Soul is therefore freed from *Prakṛti;* but *Ātman* has to go inside itself to its *Paramātman*. This Divine communion will follow as *Sāyujya* in the succeeding *Jñāna mārga*. It is the blossoming of *Bhakti* in all its glory.

VI

SĀDHANA RITUAL:

We may now discuss *Ārūrar's* path. We have referred to the worship or *pūjā,* offering water and flowers, which forms an

important spiritual practice according to the *Āgamas*—the *Caryā, Kriyā* and *Yōga.* These have been explained in the light of *Ārūrar's* poems when discussing his Religion. This is the first step of purgation or purification and the principles underlying these may be here explained as the details have been discussed in our study of Religion.

All these *Caryā, Kriyā* and *Yōga* are included under the head '*Sādhana*' which may be translated roughly as ritual. As Woodroffe has pointed out, ritual is the art of religion. Again he says, "Ritual and spiritual exercises are objectively considered the pictorial statement (of the *Vēdāntic* principles) as they are subjectively the effective means of their realization."[18] These are the means to the end, the end which is communion with the All Pervasive *Brahman,* or identity with it. In whatever way the end is defined, in the ritual stage, or in the stage of *sādhana,* there is dualism, because rituals imply a worshipper and the worshipped. It is because of this *Tāyumāṉavar* has said, "*Ōtariya tuvitamē attuvita ñānattai uṇṭupaṇum ñānamākum*"[19]—'The inexplicable dualism is the known path creating monistic knowledge'.

God may be defined in many ways but when worshipped God is the Supreme Person in the eye of all the *sādhakas.* The Absolute is in itself or relative to ourselves *Sat, Cit* and *Ānanda*—Being, Consciousness and Bliss. But this can be realized as such only by the *Siddha* who has become completely transformed so as to be free from the vile influences of mind and body.

As Augustine has said, the mind is not at rest until it finds itself in God and therefore as opposed to the tendency of the mind to wander about the things of the world, there is also a tendency in this mind to thirst for God, as beautifully brought out in the Olympic mysteries. "I am the child of the earth and the starry sky but know that my origin is divine. I am devoured by and perish with thirst. Give me without delay the fresh water which flows from 'the Lake of memory'. Pure, and issued from what is pure, I come towards Thee."[20] It is this thirst which is made permanent by ritual so that the thirst can be finally relieved by the joy of divine communion.

18. *Introduction to Principles of Tantra,* p. 1.
19. *Tāyumānavar pāṭal,* 10:3, *Tiruppanandāḷ edn.*
20. *Shaktī and Shakta,* p. 439.

VII

THEORY OF WORSHIP:

Therefore, the *sādhana* is for attaining the *siddhi*. Even in the beginning stages, the ideal is not forgotten. The final goal is always held in view, and *siddhi* is attained when the whole life becomes a worship. As stated by Woodroffe, "The human need for ceremonies in the sense of the necessity which man feels of an exterior manifestation which shall both stimulate and translate his inner feelings is such that no religion of the past has been without its rites and ceremonies and even the shallowest of epochs, whilst affecting a superiority to them have yet preserved these ceremonies in its civil life."[21] The council of Trent declared, "The Catholic Church rests with the experience of ages clothed with their splendour and has introduced mystic benediction (*mantram*), incense (*pukai*), water (*nīr*), lights (*viḷakku*), bells (*maṇi*), flowers (*pū*), vestments and all the magnificence of its ceremonies in order to excite the spirit of religion to the contemplation of the profound mysteries which they reveal. As are its faithful, the Church is composed of both body and soul. It therefore renders to the Lord a double worship, exterior and interior; the latter being the prayer of the faithful, the breviary of its priest and the voice of Him ever interceding in our favour and the former the outward motions of the liturgy".[22] In spite of the *sādhanas* being intended for all grades of worshippers, it is a mark of the greatness of *Āgamic* worship that it is open for all without distinction of caste or sex — the highest stage of spirituality and rationalistic approach are never forgotten. Again Woodroffe following Dela Vallei Poussin writes: "The virtue of its general method is not merely thaumaturgic, but is inherent in the mental states induced by *dhyāna* and other physical and mental processes and the excitation of the exterior rituals; an inherence chiefly explained by the fact that as at base all existence is of the nature of the mind, the transformation of the mind is the transformation of existence itself."[23]

Mind according to *Hinduism,* is an unconscious force, though it shows some reflected consciousness. Mind and body belonging

21. *Introduction to the Principles of Tantra,* LXXII.
22. Quoted by Woodroffe *op. cit., p. LXXI.*
23. *Ibid., op. cit.,* p. *LXXIII.*

to the '*Māyāśakti* or the finitizing power and because of this common origin become the subject and object respectively. Both these act as a screen or veil obstructing the Real in varying degrees. The rituals are intended to remove this obstruction or to purify this veil. As long as the mind exists, it must have an object or a content. The aim of the ritual is to make this content always good and pure. What can be a better object or content than the Absolute as the Supreme Person ?

The psychology of the *Vēdānta* throws a flood of light on this conception. Mind which can be compared to a lake of a reflected light on which falls the reflection of the spirit, projects itself or its rays through the sluices of the sense organs on to its object before it and takes the form of the object. Thus the mind becomes one with the object and perceives it. If the mind could similarly take the form of the Lord in the form of the image worshipped by it and assuming all the attributes of the Lord through contemplation, the ritual achieves a wonderful success. The *dhyāna* or contemplation attains this. The wavering mind has then to be steadied so that it can concentrate almost incessantly on these forms and these qualities. This has to become almost a habit, a *samskāra*. The good *samskāras* will drive away the old *samskāras* since the latter lose their force by non-user and so atrophy and die.[24]

The rituals vary according to the fitness or *adhikāra* of the respective worshippers of varying *bhāvas* or temperaments or mental developments and these attainments even with reference to one and the same individual, progressively develop from the *sthūla* or the gross to the *sūkṣma* or the subtle stages. The *Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga* and *Jñāna mārgas* are based on this gradation which ultimately depends upon the temperament of the worshipper and his emotion which in one case will be more prone to worship the Lord as the servant, in other case to serve the Lord as the son, in a third case to behave like the friend and in the fourth case to pine for the Lord as the lover. The image worshipped is not a doll; if it has a form, it is an incarnation of beauty. Even if it is a symbol or a *liṅga*, it is a sign more than a symbol. God is all pervasive and in that sense God is there in the image. What then, is done at the time of worship is, to realize the divinity existing

24. See *Viruttippirapākaram in Tamil.*

there, when the mind through the ritual, is transformed into a divine mould through contemplation. At least during the period of the *pūjā*, this is attempted to be achieved.

VIII

ĀRŪRAR AND WORSHIP:

Nampi Ārūrar speaks of *'cakaḷi ceytal'*.[25] The *Āgamas* speak of invoking God to be present there and to depart after *pūjā*. Here it is not the God that is always all-pervasive that comes or goes. It is the mind that during such an invocation, takes the form of the divine mould and gives it up at the end of the *pūjā* when the concentration ceases. The worship with concrete materials is the first stage. Next comes the internal *pūjā* or mental *pūjā* without any of these concrete materials where flowers become mental attributes and where other offerings assume spiritual significance. The *'Hōma'* or sacrifice in fire is also done mentally till it becomes *'ātmanivēdana'* itself. The aim is to keep this concentration all through the waking and dreaming stages and this is developed through various stages of *Yōga* when it blossoms into *Jñāna* or realization. Then follows *sahajaniṣṭā* when the worshipper is always in contemplation and communion with God as referred to by *Ārūrar*, *"Eṇṇi yiruntu kiṭantu naṭantum aṉṉaleṉā niṉaivār viṉai tīrppār"*.[26] *Mantras* are uttered and we have explained the theory of the *mantra* in our discussion on *artha* and *śabda prapañcas*. The *mantra* represents the very form of the Lord and by *japa* the divine power submerges the worshipper in its flood of divinity, and the *śabdaprapañca* is thus purified and transcended.

The *Tantras* speak of *Bhūtaśuddhi*, the purification of the elements. Impurities and sins are all burnt away in the mental fire and the nectar of divine rapture purifies the soul. The spiritual power lying static in *Mūlādhāra* wakes up breaking through *Svādhiṣṭhāṉa*, *Maṇipūraka*, *Anāhata*, *Viśuddhi*, *Ājñā* and reaching the *Sahasrāra* it lies in union with *Śiva*. This is at first imagined and in the end becomes true, for, as the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* says what man thinks, that he becomes, a *śṛti* which *Tāyumāṉavar* translates, *"Yātoṉṟu pāvikka nāṉ atuvātalāl uṉṉai nāṉeṉṟu pāvikka attuvita mārkkamuṟalām"*.[27] *Ārūrar* describes the difficulty of

25. 7:65:5.
26. 7:11:2.
27. *Tāyumāṉavar pāṭal*, 10:3.

such a contemplation in the verse "*Uṉṉaippōl eṉṉaip pāvikka-māṭṭēṉ*".[28] Speaking of this ritual, the *Quest* (Oct. 1913) says, "From one point of view, it is perhaps the most elaborate system of auto suggestion in the world. But the *Hindus* think of it as of greater spiritual value than mere auto-suggestion".

Usually, pleasing things are offered in worship — what the worshipper thinks pleasant and what he himself will aspire for. He offers things and then after such an offering he partakes of them, clothes himself with them. He thus tries to live in God: "*Uṭuttuk kaḷainta niṉ pītaka āṭai uṭuttuk kaḷittatu (kaḷaittatu) uṇṭu, Toṭutta tuḷāy malar cūṭık kaḷaintaṉa cūṭum ittoṇṭarkaḷōm*"[29] —'We are the servants of the Lord, clothing ourselves with His used up gold cloth eating what He leaves and adorning ourselves with His used up garlands of *tuḷaci*'. When a man reaches a spiritual state where he sees God in everything, even a stone may be offered as a flower even as *Cākkiyanāyaṉār* did. There is then nothing mean or unclean, valuable or valueless. Every act there becomes a worship, every speech a prayer, every thought a divine contemplation — this is *Sahajaniṣṭā*. This is how *Ārūrar* has looked upon everything he enjoyed. This is best illustrated by the life of the great king *Janaka*, and *Ārūrar* is one like *Janaka* in domestic or political life always living in God.

There is a story told of *Ārūrar* which explains his attitude: When *Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ* visited *Ārūrar* in *Paravaiyār's* house at *Ārūr*, this lady set before both of them greens to be separated from grass and other non-edible stuff, so as to make the greens ready for cooking. Both the saints attended to this work of helping *Paravaiyār;* but she took only those greens cleaned by *Cēramāṉ* leaving those cleaned by *Ārūrar*. *Cēramāṉ* remained puzzled. *Paravaiyār* explained that those made ready by *Ārūrar* were not to be cooked because in his *Sahaja Niṣṭā* he would have offered the greens already in his hands to God, for all the actions of *Ārūrar* were nothing but worship or *pūjā*. We have explained in this light our saint's *hymns* praying for labourers, gold and other necessities and luxuries of life. His life is one continuous worship or cotemplation or communion with God.

28. 7:54:5.
29. *Nālāyirappirapantam, Periyāḻvār Tiruppallāṇṭu,* 9.

IX

MARRIAGE —YŌGA AND YAJÑA :

There is one verse wherein our poet speaks of his embrace of *Caṅkili* as a divine communion. *Cēkkiḻār* describes the married life of *Ārūrar* as a life of divine *yōga*. This is a part of his *Sahaja Niṣṭā*. But this may remind one of the *Vīrasādhana* of the *Tantras*. This conception of sexual union as divine communion is in the best traditions of the *Upaniṣads* where the *Bṛhad Araṇyaka* speaks of it as a *Hōma*.[30] It speaks of the union of man and wife as a sacrificial rite — a sacrifice in fire wherein the woman is both the hearth (*kuṇḍa*) and flame and according to this *Upaniṣad*, he who knows this as *Hōma* attains liberation.

Woodroffe quotes and translates[31] a *Tāntric mantra* which will explain *Cēkkiḻār's* description of this as a *yōga*; for this *mantra* speaks of this as a *yōga* and *hōma*: *"Ōm dharmādharma havir-diptē ātmagnau manasā sruchā, Suṣumnāvartamāna nityam akṣa-vrittir juhōmyaham svāha"* — *'Ōm*. Into the fire which is spirit (*ātma*) brightened by (the pouring thereon) of the ghee of merit and demerit, I, by the path of *suṣumnā* (the central nerve) ever sacrifice (to *hōma* of) the functions of the senses, using the mind as the ladle. *Svāha'*.[32]

An illuminative explanation of the underlying idea is offered by Woodroffe:

"To the ordinary English reader the association of eating and drinking and sexual union with worship will probably be incongruous, if not downright repulsive. 'Surely', he might say, 'such things are far apart from prayer to God. We go and do them, it is true, because they are a necessity of our animal nature, but prayer or worship have nothing to do with such coarseness. We may pray before or after (as in Greece) on taking food, but the physical acts between are not prayer. Such notions are based partly on that dualism which keeps separate and apart God and his creature, and partly, on certain false and deprecatory notions concerning matter and material functions. According to Indian Monism such worship is not only understandable but (I am not

30. 13th *mantra of Hōmōprakaraṇa of Bṛhad Araṇyakā.*
31. *Shaktī and Shakta*, p. 598.
32. *Pranatōṣini and Tantrasāra*, p. 698.

speaking of any particular form of it) the only religious attitude consistent with its principles Man is, in his essence or spirit, divine and one with the universal spirit. His mind and body and all their functions are divine, for they are not merely a manifestation of the Power (*Shaktī*) of God but that Power itself. To say that matter is in itself low or evil is to calumniate that Power. Nothing in natural function is low or impure to the mind which recognized it as *Shaktī* and the working of *Shaktī*. It is the ignorant and, in a true sense, vulgar mind which regards any natural function as low or coarse; the action in this case is seen in the light of the inner vulgarity of mind. It has been suggested that in its proper application the *maithuna karma* is only application to sexual function of the principles of *Yōga*.[33] Once the reality of the world as grounded in the Absolute is established, the body seems to be less an obstacle to freedom, for it is a form of that self-same Absolute. The creative function being natural is not in itself culpable. There is no real antinomy between spirit and nature which is an instrument for the realization of the spirit. The method borrows, it is said (ib), that of *Yōga* not to frustrate, but to regulate enjoyment. Conversely, enjoyment produces *Yōga* by the union of body and spirit. In the psycho-physiological rites of the *Shāktas,* enjoyment is not an obstacle to *Yōga* but may also be a means to it. This, he says, is an important conception which recalls the discovery of the *Mahāyāna* that *Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa* are one. For here are made one, *Yōga* which liberated and *Bhōga* which enchains (ib.). It will then be readily understood that according to this doctrine only those are competent for this *Yōga* who are truly free, or on the way to freedom, of all dualism.[34]

X

SOCIAL WORSHIP:

This is from the individual point of view. But *Hinduism* believes in universal salvation. Therefore, it cannot forget the society and social worship. The temples provide the means of such a social worship, and the *Tēvāram* saints with their hearts beating in communion with the hearts of the world at large, toil hard for the universal salvation through their songs even today

33. *Masson-Oursel Historie de la Philosophie Indienne,* pp. 231-233.
34. *Shaktī and Shakta by Sir John Woodroffe*—Ganesh & Co., pp. 599-600.

sung in all the temples of the *Tamil* land. As pointed out elsewhere this social communion in song is preferred by *Ārūrar* to *Mukti* or rather this is looked upon as the bliss of *Mukti* itself.[35] Dr. V. V. Ramana Sastri (in his introduction to Nallaswamy Pillai's *Studies in Śaiva Siddhānta*) brings out the importance of temple worship in *Āgamic* lore which has influenced the whole of India, thanks to our *Tēvāram* saints: "If the Fire worship be regarded as the ritual inculcated in the *Vēdas* as the outer symbolism of spiritual truths, the temple worship may, on its side, be also said to assume a similar importance in regard to the *Āgamas*. For the rest, it will be seen that in *India* at the present day there is hardly a *Hindu* who does not observe some kind of temple worship or another, which points to the conclusion that the *Āgamas* have had, in one form or another, a universal hold, upon the continent of *Hindu India* and that their influence tells".[36]

35. 7:36:6; 7:56:6.
36. xxx.

CHAPTER II

FROM *KARMA* TO LOVE

I

THE NEGATIVE AND THE POSITIVE WAYS:

The mind gets purified through *Caryā*, *Kriyā* and *Yōga* and the soul realizes its true status through such purgatory. The path of righteousness is not an easy one. Some traverse it by hating what is evil. This is a negative way and their code of conduct consists of a series of 'Do nots'. The other way loves righteousness, having created for it a permanent interest therein. This is the positive way. Unless there is interest, the child does not learn anything by our insisting on mere negative discipline; nor, does it do the right kind of thing. The modern teacher therefore concentrates on creating interest in the mind of the child and inspiring it with love for the particular study and good conduct. Chastity is not promoted by any advice that extra marital love is sin; it is really promoted by the growth of love between the married couple, when there will be no whisper of extra-marital love. When this love is there, nothing appears to the mind or the eye except the beloved. Where can then be any room for sin? In the path of love when the Lord is everything for the soul, nothing else is seen and therefore there can be no sin. As love develops, old habits are forgotten and in the end become erased completely. The positive discipline of love makes the mind pure. Even the remembrance of the past habits becomes abhorrent. This is how the mystics become purified.

II

THE TAPAS OF LOVE:

The soul or *puruṣa* lost its glory by identifying itself with *prakṛti* and individualizing or finitising itself in the *ahaṅkāra* or the feeling of self. This gives rise to desire for sense pleasure and when there is an obstruction for hatred, frustration and confusion are the result. The whole thing ends in moral collapse. The descent must be reversed and that can be done only by achieving freedom from this false identity and selfishness. The saint does

not speak of the 'I' or the 'Mine'. The lovers in their ecstasy of union do not speak of the separatist 'I' or the 'Mine'. The lover speaks of the beloved as the 'I' losing his separate individuality. Therefore, in this path of *Bhakti* or love, *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* and false *abhimāna* or identification are all completely dissolved.

This process of spiritual purification is spoken of as *'Tavam'*. But then that should not become egotism. Righteousness, when it is not also love, becomes priggishness. It is this sense *Śrī Vacana Bhūṣaṇam* condemns self-effort when it is egotism. The smaller or minor self should die giving room to the higher self. In this sense ethics is a spiritual purification. *Tapas* thus may be good or bad.

We have already referred to the *yōgis* and *bhōgis* following this path of *Tapas*.[1] Therefore, *Tapas* is not merely torture and practice of austerity. It is in this wider sense that *Tiruvaḷḷuvar's* chapters on *Tuṟavaṟam* are divided into two parts, *Vratam* (which is merely *Tapas*) and *Jñānam*. The spiritual progress is a spiritual discipline restraining the free license of the mind and thereby utilizing its energies in fruitful and spiritual ways. This process can be spoken of as renunciation in the sense in which *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* calls it *'Tuṟavu'* because there is the renunciation of selfishness rather than the smaller self — the *ahaṅkāra* and the *mamakāra* — *"Yāṉ eṉatu eṉṉum cerukkaṟuttal"*[2] though in another sense this is a process of perfection and infinite bliss. The aim of this spiritual process is to awaken in us the universal consciousness which flows out as universal love — a love which cannot bear the misery and troubles of the people at large which therefore cannot think of doing any harm to others, though as a result of this *ahimsā* one has to undergo any amount of suffering. *Kaṇṇaki,* the heroine of *Cilappatikāram* was going through the desert. Her gentle feet had to tread on the heat of the stones on the midday path but the epic poet states that she did not feel the agony because of her care, pity and love for her husband who was walking beside her in that burning desert. So does it happen in the spiritual paths. Suffering will be there, but it augments the love and attenuates misery. It is this positive feeling that is expressed by *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* in a negative way.

1. 7:74:3.
2. *Tirukkuṟaḷ,* 346.

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in terms of its effect in putting up with all personal suffering and in doing no harm to others — *"Uṟṟa nōy nōṉṟal uyirkku uṟukaṇ ceyyāmai aṟṟē tavattiṟku uru"*.[3] If this positive basis is forgotten and the mere negative aspect alone is emphasized, *Tapas* is nothing more than self-torture, not a mere discipline. Sometimes, people take pride in calling such kind of self immolation a *Tapas.*

When there is not that deep love, the *Tapas* becomes cruel. Therefore, *Ārūrar* calls such tortures, cruel *Tapas, 'Ceṭittavam'*,[4] as against *'Aṭittavam'* (*ibid.*), which is the self-surrender of love where like *Kaṇṇaki,* the soul forgets its own separate existence, and living and moving in God, it feels it is God and not itself that lives and moves and does all its acts. This is the *Tapas* of truth — *'Meyttavam'*.[5] He shows the way of truth so that we may not be drowning ourselves in the cruel hell — *"Vennarakattaḻuntāmai namakku meynneṟiyait tāṉkāṭṭum Vētamutalāṉ"*.[6] He shows us this good path. He is on the path devoid of birth. He is the Lord of pure and holy path — *'Tūneṟiyāṉ'*.[7] In this path of love the means and the goal are nothing but God. He is not only the goal to be reached through the path of goodness and purity and the great guide showing us this way and taking us through that path but also the path itself, the straight path, *'Cenneṟi'*;[8] the beautiful path, *'Anneṟi'*[9] and the path of truth, *'Meynneṟi'*.[10]

III

HIDE AND SEEK

1. EBB AND FLOW:

In the path of love we were told[11] that God plays a hide and seek game with the soul, now showing His face to the soul and then withdrawing it, which are spoken of as union and separation, *'Saṁślēṣa'* and *'Viślēṣa'* creating respectively a feeling of joy and confidence and a feeling of misery and self condemnation.

3. *Kuṟaḷ,* 261.
4. 7:14:6.
5. 7:82:7.
6. 7:40:10.
7. 7:56:4.
8. 7:51:8.
9. 7:51:8.
10. 7:40:10.
11. *Ācārya Hṛdayam,* II-30.

Ārūrar also speaks of the Lord agreeing to save our poet and then hiding Himself away.[12] We have seen the working of these feelings in our saint when he was giving expression alternately to his feelings of moral greatness and moral despair. In other places also where he refers to the other aspects of spiritual progress, we find these feelings alternating. As *Ācārya Hṛdayam* says, *"Jñānattil taṉ pēccu; prēmattil peṇ pēccu"*[13] — 'In the path of *Jñāna* there is the speech of the poet as himself; in love there is the speech of the poet as the lady who loves.' We have referred elsewhere[14] to the utterance of the love-lorn lady but we may note the cries of joy and despair proceeding from the poet as the poet.

2. *SELF-SURRENDER*:

Speaking of his complete self-surrender to the Lord, he says that he had not relied on the relationship of the mother or the father; he was satisfied with his relationship to the Lordship of God.[15] He has practised this *tapas* or self surrender to the Lord.[16] "I have offered my head, my tongue and my mind all to Himself and to His service and I have lived through serving His feet as His slave".[17] "I am yours by right",[18] cries he. "My mind, my heart melts in love".[19] In the 15th *hymn* and in the 54th *hymn*, he speaks of his imperishable attachment to God in terms of his serving Him, praising Him and singing Him even if the Lord does not care for him. "I shall not murmur that you have made me suffer. I accept everything".[20] "There is the target to be aimed and I have tried to reach that goal. I have taken refuge in You so that I may be saved as long as the mind exists".[21] "I shall worship You even by force".[22] "I shall not praise anyone but You".[23] "Whom shall I think of except Yourself"?"[24] "Can I say 'no' after

12. 7:62:5.
13. *Ch.* 2., *Sūt.* 32.
14. *Vol. III, hymn,* 37.
15. 7:14:2.
16. 7:14:6.
17. 7:14:1.
18. 7:14:11.
19. 7:14:11.
20. 7:15:6.
21. 7:15:7.
22. 7:15:8.
23. Refrain of *hymn* 21 and *hymn* 26.
24. Refrain of *hymn* 24.

having become Your slave?"[25] "Shall I slight You even for a minute?"[26] "Is it possible to forget the Lord of *Ārūr?*"[27] "Forgetting God, is death" is our poet's conviction and feeling.[28]

This complete self-surrender is expressed in the 95th *hymn* where the poet says that he has become the irredeemable slave of the Lord without thinking of any one[29] and he cries, "You may sell me, O, Lord, I have come to serve You with all my heart".[30] In another *hymn* he says, "The five rulers of the senses are there to prevent me from going away from the wrong path. But in spite of them my tongue praises You and I bind You to my mind with the garland of words."[31] He speaks of the pleasure of the company of the followers of the Lord and his spiritual regeneration thereby. "I shall become the slave of Your followers".[32] "Having become Your servant, I have served Your followers and have heard all that has to be heard".[33] "I shall become the slave of Your followers" is the refrain of *H.* 52. "Your followers are those who save me also" is the refrain of *H.* 75. He speaks of his worship through music and poetry, begging of the Lord for the path of *Tapas*.[34] "He comes with the followers, with flowers in the hand, love in the heart and tears in the eye".[35] He is sure of his salvation and birthlessness.[36] "I thought of You and You at once entered my body"[37] and "You have ordered me to think of You and I have become devoid of all anger and disease".[38] "Wherever I may think, there You become one withe me".[39] The 58th *hymn* gives us an idea of the Lord coming and saving him.

25. Refrain of *hymn* 1.
26. Refrain of *hymn* 38.
27. Refrain of *hymn* 59.
28. 7:48:3.
29. 7:95:1.
30. 7:95:2.
31. 7:96:1; 7:96:4.
32. 7:14:11.
33. 7:21:2; 7:24:4.
34. 7:15:5; 7:58:4.
35. 7:23:4.
36. 7:1:4; 7:48:1.
37. 7:21:6.
38. 7:21:9.
39. 7:23:2

IV

SELF CONDEMNATION:

In moments of selfcondemnation, he cries in despair: "Tell me a way of escape" is the refrain of *hymn* No. 3. "I am frightened, O, Lord" is the refrain of *hymn* No. 8. "I have not thought of You for many days and wandered about like a devil".[40] He speaks of his fear of the delusion of a false conclusion and torment of doubts all through the varied births and deaths and through the persisting progress in spite of them:[41] *"Tuyakku mayakku"*.[42] "I am afraid of the *karman*"—This he repeats very often.[43] In such moments, he feels sulky and cries, "Should You not excuse my faults"?[44] "Is there no Lord but You, if You cannot excuse my faults"?—The 14th *hymn* is in this strain. So also are *hymns* Nos. 89 and 95.

V

REPENTANCE:

This self-condemnation is the sincere repentance of a soul reaching higher spiritual spheres when it looks back on what till now appeared to be an eternal past, which will have no end. This repentance moves the heart of the readers. Even when we read the enumeration of the gruesome faults, there arises in our mind that the heart from which this cry of sincere repentance has gone forth, has become completely purified and spiritualized.

This repentance is a sure and certain sign of conversion — moral and spiritual. There can be no trace of evil or sin, all of them having been burnt away in the divine spark of this repentance, this fire of love, bearing no separation from the Lord. This cry of despair is the surest way of attaining God, says *Māṇikkavācakar*: *"Aḻutāl uṉṉaip peṟalāmē"*.[45] In the very *hymn* of self-realization where *Ārūrar* had the vision of God at *Kaḻumalam*, he gives expression to this great truth: "Except to those who contemplate on Him, and weep with tears in their two eyes, His two

40. 7:1:2.
41. 7:35:10.
42. See *Ācārya Hṛdayam*, 2:12.
43. 7:54:6: 7:54:8; 7:58:6.
44. 7:70:6.
45. *Tiruvācakam, Catakam*, 9:10.

feet are not known"[46]—"*Aḷu malark kaṇṇiṇai aṭiyavark kallāl a̱rivari tava̱n tiruvaṭi iṇai iraṇṭum*"

VI

PURIFICATION :

Therefore, it is clear the process ultimately consists in purifying the mind and the heart. You think of Him for a minute and He makes that heart His abode. He exists as the unique one to the mind of those who think of Him: "*Karuttāra u̱ṟṟuḷaṉām oruvaṉ.*[47] If the mind is oriented towards Him, He rushes into it. If soul is hungering for God, God is also hungering for soul. Our poet speaks his hankering after God, in terms of his hunger—"*Paciyai ottē nāṉ kaṇṭēṉ*".[48] God's hunger is greater than the hunger of the soul. 'If you just think of Him in the corner of your heart, He rushes and fills up the whole heart'—"*Pāvippār maṉam pāvikkoṇṭāṉ*",[49] a statement reminding us of the Prophet Mahommad's saying, "When man walks towards God, God runs towards him". It looks as though he has no grandeur elsewhere. 'He shines', our poet says, 'in the mind of those who ever think of Him'—"*Cintitteṉṟum niṉaintelụvārkaḷ cintaiyiṟ ṟikaḷum Civaṉ*".[50] 'He is in the mind of those who worship'—"*Vantippārtam maṉatti-ṉuḷḷāṉ.*"[51] 'He never leaves off His attachment to the mind of those great loving souls'—"*Mētakutaṉ pattar maṉattiṟaiyum paṟṟu viṭātavaṉ*".[52] 'His abode, for ever, is the heart of those who have taken refuge in Him'—"*Tamakku eṉṟum irukkai caraṇaṭaintār neñcaṅkoṇṭāṉ*".[53] It is not only contemplation and self-surrender but also love and hankering after Him that are emphasized—"*Urukil uḷḷuṟaivāṉ*"[54]—'If you melt in love, He resides in your heart'. 'Thereafter, He is in their mind, He is in their tongue and He is all the Subject matter of the whole world'—"*Naṟpata-meṉṟunaṟvār coṟpatamār Civaṉ*";[55] "*Vāyār maṉattāl niṉaikkum*

46. 7:58:10.
47. 7:51:9.
48. 7:77:9.
49. 7:57:2.
50. 7:61:8.
51. 7:67:7.
52. 7:84:9.
53. 7:19:5.
54. 7:86:5.
55. 7:84:3.

avarukku aruntavattil tūyār".[56] Therefore, once He takes possession of the heart, the saint does not think that he thinks, he acts or he sees, or he moves in the world; God alone thinks, lives and moves thereafter. Has not St. Paul said, "It is not I that live, but Christ dwelleth in me"? And the *Śaiva Siddhānta Philosophy* speaks of this stage as the transformation of the *'Paśukaraṇa'* into the *'Patikaraṇa'* the organs of the soul becoming the organs of the Lord.

VII

THE MARKAṬA AND THE MĀRJĀRA : THE MONKEY AND THE CAT :

All this process of spiritualizing or sublimation is looked upon only as the work of the Lord. It is true in some places the saint speaks of his going to the Lord, but the Lord leaving him in the lurch. This may remind us of the *'markaṭa nyāya'* or the way of the monkey, where the young one of its own accord clasps and embraces the mother monkey. The other way is that of a cat, *'mārjāra kisōra nyāya'* where the mother carries the kitten by its own mouth from place to place. It ought not to be concluded that our poet advocates the former way as the real truth. What he speaks in a sulky mood, is a cry of despair. He has been emphasizing again and again the doctrine of Grace. In one verse he clearly states: "The Lord had come without my knowledge to make my stony heart melt, showed His feet and removed my fetters".[57]

VIII

THE COMPANION :

Our poet feels that the Lord has been with him always as the invisible companion even when the poet has been leading the path of faults. He was his support and help in times of his danger—*"Eṉ iṭarttuṇai"*,[58] when the Lord appeared to him as though He was the friend of the poet and none else. He was his comrade — *'Tōḻaṉ'*[59] a comrade who however was a saviour too — *"Eṉṉaiyāḷ tōḻaṉ"*.[60] The poet speaks of the Lord as his envoy or

56. 7:19:10.
57. 7:67:5.
58. 7:26:2.
59. 7:51:10.
60. 7:84:9.

'tūtan',[61] perhaps the invisible messenger whispering in the hearts of others and changing their minds to the benefit of the poet. In this connection the tradition is that this word *'tūtan'* refers to the Lord going as a messenger to *Paravai* to appease her jealousy against *Caṅkili*. These terms *'tuṇai'*,[62] *'tōḻan'*[63] and *'tūtan'*[64] are emphasized by the traditionalist so that the path of our poet's worship may be described as the path of the friend. As such, the poet describes the Lord as having been his companion in all his faults — *"Tōḻaṉumāy yāṉ ceyyum turicukaḷuk kuṭaṉāki"*;[65] *"Tōḻamai aruḷit toṇṭaṉēṉ ceyta turicukaḷ poṟukkum nātaṉ"*.[66] The spiritual significance of this will be explained later on when we quote *Śrī Vacaṇa Bhūṣaṇam*, where how the faults are transformed into the good efforts of the soul is explained.

IX

JĪVANMUKTA:

The alternating feelings of elation and self depression are found even in the stage of *Śivōham Bhāvanā*. In a moment of depression he says, *"Uṉṉaippōl eṉṉaip pāvikkamāṭṭēṉ"*,[67] but in a moment of confidence of joy he speaks of *"Nāṉāya paraṉ"*.[68] The soul is ultimately purified and gets itself lost in the Absolute. Everything is felt to have been performed with nothing more to be achieved — *"Kēṭṭēṉ kēṭpatellām piṟavāmai kēṭṭoḻintēṉ"*;[69] *"Yātiṉukkācaip paṭukēṉ"*.[70] This is the feeling of the victory of the absolute achievement and perfection. The *jīvanmukta* feels he is a *'kṛtakṛtya'*, one that has performed all that has to be performed and exclaims, *'Pūrṇōham'*—'I am the fullness of a plenum'.

X

PROGRESSIVE SUBLIMATION:

The working of *karma* has been described in terms of love. The law of *karma* is, from one point of view, the law of cause

61. 7:84:9.
62. 7:26:2; 7:64:8.
63. 7:51:10; 7:84:9.
64. 7:84:9.
65. 7:51:10.
66. 7:68:8.
67. 7:54:5.
68. 7:38:4.
69. 7:21:2.
70. 7:15:3.

and effect based on the uniformity of nature. This is, however, mechanical and does not appeal to our sense of justice and fair play though it is necessary for preventing crimes. Therefore, the idea of a divine ruler holding the scales even arises. This leads from the preventive theory to the retributive theory of punishment which is one way of looking at the worth of the theory of *karma*. The individual has a worth of his own and he cannot be sacrificed completely for the group, in the name of prevention or retribution for attacks on the group. The conception of reforming man emphasizes the fact that apart from the group there is the individual to be saved. The reformed or purified individual glorifies the group as well. Punishment becomes thus reformation. Today crime is more often looked upon as a disease of the mind and reformation itself is spoken of in terms of cure. Today this cure is becoming a matter of education and culture, through the provision of proper environments and experiences. Sometimes, people even speak of changing the world through conditioning the reflexes but if the individual worth and freedom are forgotten when man is made a machine, there cannot be any moral grandeur. Therefore, freedom of will is asserted and the erstwhile conception of the ruler or king becomes now the conception of a doctor and a teacher and the method adopted by the Lord for saving the world is spoken of as a medicine or '*maruntu*',[71] the Lord Himself being described as *Guru* or Master.[72] But in all these cases, the Lord or God stands away from man. Therefore, the ruler is feared; the teacher is revered. To make this relationship between God and soul very intimate, God is spoken of as the father and the mother,[73] but the relationship even here is not so intimate as to be one of communion. To avoid this, God is spoken of as an intimate friend and comrade.[74] Even this appears to be a kind of exterior relationship. The most intimate relationship is that of the lovers and, therefore, God is spoken of as the beloved of the soul.[75] Love works such a great transformation that all the erstwhile selfishness is completely destroyed. There is a complete self-sacrifice and self-surrender in love. Here, there is no slavery but freedom. God also ceases to be dictating from a higher

71. 7:27:3.
72. 7:62:4.
73. 7:53:3.
74. 7:26:2; 7:51:10; 7:84:9.
75. *Hymn*, 37.

pedestal. He becomes the Soul of the soul inspiring every one of its acts.

Karma thus becomes *Dharma* and the divine play of His *līlā* of *kṛpā* (mercy). As *Appar* says, 'Mountains of sins disappear by a spark of His love even as mountains of firewood are burnt away by a spark of fire'—"*Viṇṇuṟa aṭukkiya viṟakiṉ vevvaḻal uṇṇiyi pukil avai oṉṟumillaiyām paṇṇiya ulakiṉil payiṉṟa pāvattai naṇṇiniṉ ṟaṟuppatu namaccivāyavē*".[76] Therefore, even this, is only according to the law of *karma* when it becomes the law of love. It is not the outward act but the intention that is important in judging the *karmas*. When the intention is deified, when every act of the saint is inspired by the Lord, there is really no act of the saint and there is no *karma* to be enjoyed or suffered by him. Thus is *karma* transcended.

The feeling of self-condemnation, is a feeling of repentance revealing a purification of heart, a purity which is also expressed by our poet. The poet feels in a moment of self-condemnation that the Lord's Grace is so powerful as to pardon all sins. Even the faults of his, are, he feels, loved by the Lord even as the dirt of the calf is licked away by the mother cow. This is the doctrine of Grace. *Śaktinipātam* is the descending of this power of Grace on the soul.

76. *Appar,* 11:3.

CHAPTER III

GRACE AND ETHICS

I

DOCTRINE OF GRACE:

Lord's Grace or *'Aruḷ'* is the Mother. *Vēdānta Dēsikar's* conception that while He loves rule, she rules love and overpowers might, is probably the same as that of *Śaivite* conception of *Śiva* and *Umā;* only the *Śaivites* speak of a final stage when *Śiva* and *Umā* are but one. *Piḷḷai Lōkācārya's* theory about the working of this Grace is more applicable to *Ārūrar,* though not his conception of the Mother who according to *Piḷḷai* is not *Vibhu* or infinite but only a *mediatrix* interceding on behalf of the sinner and subduing the retributive will of the Lord by Her overflowing mercy and thereby making the Lord the Saviour and the soul the *mukta.* The second part of *Śrī Vacanabhūṣaṇam* insists on the spontaneity of Divine mercy as opposed to its attainment by our effort. According to *Piḷḷai,* "Responsiveness to Grace has more religious value than the responsibility of the *jīva* to merit it. Operative Grace like the free flow of mother's milk is different from co-operative Grace which is like artificial milk, and the *upāya* mentality savours of egoity". Surrender brings on us the Absolute rain of Grace which is bestowed and not merited by egoistic effort. This, very well explains the doctrine of Grace which *Ārūrar* refers to as "*Kuṟṟam ceyyiṉum kuṇam eṉak karutum koḷkai*".[1]

Our poet many a time and in many ways praises this Grace of the Lord. He is the Lord of Grace—*'Aruḷāḷaṉ'* — that is mentioned in his very first verse[2] and the place where the poet was thus saved probably came to be known as *'Aruḷ Tuṟai',* the Ford of God's Grace. He is the munificent Lord and His Grace seems to be so unique when it flows towards the poet. He gives Himself to think about Him — "*Taṉṉai eṉṉai niṉaikkat taruvāṉ*".[3] He feels the munificent Lord is a companion, all to himself. The *'saulabhya'*

1. 7:55:4.
2. 7:1:1.
3. 7:57:1.

—*'eḷimai'* is often emphasized—*'Kāṇap pēṇumavarkku eḷiyāṉ'*.[4] He makes the poet receive His sweet Grace—*"Eṉṉai iṉṉaruḷ eytuvippāṉ"*.[5] He is *'Pirāṉ'*,[6] the Great One, offering all help. He is the divine tree which satisfies all desires—*'Kaṟpakam'*.[7] His victories (of *Vīraṭṭāna*) are well known; but our poet, suggesting that all these victories are the victories of His Grace, describes the Lord as the warrior of Divine Grace—*"Tiruvaruḷ cēr Cēvakaṉ"*.[8] He is the merciful to all. He blesses all without saying 'no'—*"Ellārkkum illai eṉṉātu aruḷ ceyvār"*.[9] He blesses his devotees by removing the afflictions—*"Pīṭai tīra aṭiyārkku aruḷum Perumāṉ"*.[10] He is clothed in His Grace devoid of all miseries—*"Allalil aruḷē puṉaivāṉ"*[11] (There is another reading *'purivāṉ'* instead of *'puṉaivāṉ'*. Then it will mean that He will bestow His Grace upon us during the time of our miseries). He blesses us by removing our miseries—*"Allal tīrt taruḷ ceyya vallāṉ"*.[12] He destroys the *karmas* at once, even those ancient *karmas*—*"Ollai val viṉaikaḷ keṭuppaṉ"*.[13] He helps those attached to Him: "He is One who will not get detached from them—*"Uṟṟavarkku utavum Perumāṉ"*;[14] *"Paṟṟiṉārkku eṉṟum paṟṟavaṉ"*.[15] He is Good to those who come near Him, and who are attached to Him and who praise Him—*"Naṇṇiṉārkku eṉṟum nallavaṉ"*;[16] *"Paṟṟiṉārkaṭku nallār"*.[17] It is impossible to leave Him once you move or be in communion with Him—*"Viraviṉāl viṭutaṟkariyāṉ"*.[18] He forgives all faults and removes them—*"Piḻaiyaip poṟuppāṉ"*;[19] *"Piḻaiyelām tavirap paṇippāṉ."*[20] That is His Grace which is the

4. 7:56:9.
5. 7:56:2.
6. 7:22:1.
7. 7:68:5.
8. 7:70:8.
9. 7:53:4.
10. 7:53:10.
11. 7:56:3.
12. 7:61:5.
13. 7:56:8.
14. 7:61:2.
15. 7:61:2.
16. 7:61:7.
17. 7:33:4,8.
18. 7:59:2.
19. 7:59:1
20. 7:59:1.

very form of forbearance—*"Kamaiyār karuṇaiyiṉāṉ"*.[21] It leads to *Jñāna;* He blesses by removing doubt—*"Caṅkaiyai nīṅka aruḷi"*.[22]

II

KARMA TRANSCENDED:

Mind gets purified and the soul proceeds towards communion with God. The never ending cycle of *karma* is transcended. All the fetters and ignorance recede away like a mirage which has been deceiving and teasing us as though it were a beautiful pond of pure water in the desert—*"Urāttuṉait tērtteṉap pācam oruva"*.[23] Divine communion results. Therefore, his transcending the *karma* is very important because salvation is certain thereafter. All our miseries are the result of *karma* and God removes our hunger—*"Paci tīrppāṉ"*.[24] He sets at naught to our calumnies beforehand—*"Varumpaḻi vārāmē tavirppāṉ"*;[25] removes our sufferings—*"Varuttam kaḷaivāṉ"*;[26] removes our anxieties and diseases—*"Kavalai kaḷaivāṉ"*;[27] *"Piṇi kaḷaivāṉ"*;[28] *"Kaṭṭamum piṇiyum kaḷaivāṉ"*;[29] removes them for ever—*"Allal uḷḷaṉa tīrttiṭuvāṉ"*;[30] removes the obstructions—*"Iṭar tīrkkavallāṉ"*[31] and the defects—*"Ūṉamāyiṉa tīrkkavallāṉ"*; removes the sorrow—*"Tuyar tīrppāṉ"*.[32] This happens because the *karmas*—the ancient *karmas* (*Paṇṭai viṉaikaḷ*);[33] cease to have any effect thereafter, receding away as a mirage. Our poet says this happens as soon as one falls at the feet of the Lord in self-surrender and the transformation seems to be so sudden that one has to speak there of the Grace of the Lord—*"Toḻalum tolviṉai tīrkkiṉṟa cōti"*;[34] *"Aṭaivār viṉai tīrkkum purivuṭaiyar"*,[35] *"Paṟiyā viṉaikaḷ avai tīrkkum Para-*

21. 7:26:2.
22. 7:19:3.
23. *Śivajñānabōdham, Sūt.* 9.
24. 7:29:3.
25. 7:29:5.
26. 7:59:7.
27. 7:41:5.
28. 7:29:3.
29. 7:59:2.
30. 7:56:10.
31. 7:57:7.
32. 7:57:8.
33. 7:56:9; *Ollai viṉaikaḷ*, 7:56:8.
34. 7:12:9.
35. 7:11:1.

maṉ"[36] "*Paracuvār viṉaip paṟṟaṟuppāṉ*";[37] "*Pāḻām viṉaikaḷ avai tīrkkum Paramaṉ*";[38] "*Pantitta viṉaip paṟṟaṟuppāṉ*"[39]—Here it will be also seen that He uproots the *karmas.* Even their trace of previous attachment disappears—"*Aritta Nampi aṭikai toḻuvār nōy*";[40] "*Aṭaivār viṉaikaḷ aṟuppāṉ*";[41] "*Viṉaiyai vīṭṭa naṉṟum nalla Nātaṉ*";[42] "*Eṟṟum viṉaikaḷ tīrppār*".[43] He is the medicine and nectar capable of uprooting even the strongest *karmas* to those who worship or circumambulate Him—"*Valam koḷvāravar valviṉai tīrkkum maruntu*".[44] This Grace of removing the *karmas* is bestowed upon all in this world—"*Ulakil uḷḷār viṉaikaḷ tīrppār.*"[45] That is the confidence of our poet, the confidence of universal salvation, for God is One who blesses all—"*Ellārkkum illai eṉṉātu aruḷ ceyvār*".[46]

III

KARMA AND GRACE RECONCILED:

1. *Śivajñāna Yōgi*

The working of the *karma* in bringing on this Grace of the Lord is explained by *Śivajñāna Yōgi* in his commentary on *Śivajñānabōdham.* All the good things we do, bring on good results but they are after all gold-fetters as opposed to iron-fetters of evil acts. But these good acts are called '*Pacu puṇṇiyam*' because they are not done with the proper feeling of self-sacrifice in the name of God, when alone they will be *Śivapuṇṇiyam.* In the *pacupuṇṇiyam,* the ego is not dead, whilst in the *Śivapuṇṇiyam* it is completely erased. How does one escape these fetters by doing good acts? Though the *Pacupuṇṇiyam* is intended to benefit some others in the society, because the Lord is all pervasive, this act intended consciously for some one also, goes unconsciously to please the Lord ultimately. This way, *Pacupuṇṇiyam* leads to *Śivapuṇ-*

36. 7:52:4.
37. 7:68:2.
38. 7:52:8.
39. 7:61:8.
40. 7:63:6.
41. 7:91:6.
42. 7:91:7.
43. 7:91:9.
44. 7:75:9.
45. 7:91:8.
46. 7:53:4.

ṉiyam. Therefore, the immediate result is the gold-fetters, but ultimately, on account of the *Śivapuṇṇiyam* accumulating and transforming the soul, it experiences the Divine Bliss. *Śivajñāna Yōgi* asserts, this is the meaning of *Ārūrar's* verse, "*Vēmpiṉoṭu tīṅkarumpu viravi eṉait tīrttīr*".[47] '*Vēmpu*' or the bitter margosa-seed-like experience is the experience of *karma* or fetters. Divine bliss, sweet like the sugar-cane is the unconscious result of *Śivapuṇṇiyam*. In this way the soul is in the end completely transformed —'*Tīrttīr*'.[48]

2. *Piḷḷai Lōkācāryar*

Śrī Vacanabhūṣaṇam, by *Piḷḷai Lōkācāriyar*, beautifully expresses this unconscious purification of our acts even in our physical and mental plane and it is worth quoting that part of the text here:

"*Tripāt vipūtiyilē paripūrṇānupavam naṭavāniṟka, atuṇṭa turukkāṭṭātē, tēcāntarakatanāṉa putraṉ pakkalilē pitru hṛtayam kiṭakkumāpōlē, camcārikaḷ pakkalilē tiruvuḷḷam kuṭipōy, ivarkaḷaip pirintāl āṟṟamāṭṭātē, ivarkaḷōṭē kalantu parimāṟukaikkuk karaṇa kaḷēparaṅkaḷaik koṭuttu, avaṟṟaikkoṇṭu vyāparikkaik kīṭāṉa cakti vicēṣaṅkaḷaiyum koṭuttu, kaṇkāṇa niṟkil āṇaiyiṭṭu vilakkuvārkaḷ-eṉṟu kaṇṇukkut tōṟṟātapaṭi, uṟaṅkukiṟa prajaiyait tāy mutukilē yaṇaittukkoṇṭu kiṭakkumāpōlē, tāṉarinta campantamē hētuvāka viṭamāṭṭātē, akavāyilē aṇaittukkoṇṭu āṭciyil toṭarcci naṉṟeṉṟu viṭātē, cattaiyē nōkki uṭaṉkēṭaṉāy, ivarkaḷ acatkarmaṅkaḷilē pravarttikkumpōtu mīṭkamāṭṭātē, anumati tāṉattaippaṇṇi utācīṉaraip-pōlē iruntu, mīṭkaikkiṭam pārttu, naṉmaiyeṉṟu pēriṭalāvatoru tīmaiyum kāṇātē, neṟṟiyaik kottippārttāl oruvaḻiyālum pacaikāṇātoḻintāl, aprāpyameṉṟu kaṇṇa nīrōṭē mīḷuvatu; taṉakkēṟa viṭam peṟṟavaḷavilē, eṉ ūraic coṉṉāy eṉ pēraic coṉṉāy eṉ aṭiyārai nōkkiṉāy avarkaḷ viṭāyait tīrttāy avarkaḷukku otuṅka niḻalaik koṭuttāy eṉṉumāpōlē cilavaṟṟai ēriṭṭu, maṭimāṅkāyiṭṭu, poṉvāṇiyaṉ poṉṉai uraikallilē uraittu meḻukālē eṭuttuk kālkaḷañceṉṟu tiraṭṭumāpōlē, janmaparamparaikaḷtōṟum, yātruccikam prācaṅkika māṉuṣaṅkikam eṉkiṟa cukruta vicēṣaṅkaḷaik kaṟpittukkoṇṭu, tāṉē avaṟṟai oṉṟu pattākki naṭattikkoṇṭu pōrum*.[49] *Laḷitācaritātikaḷilē ivvarttam curukka moḻiyak kāṇalām.*"[50]

47. 7:46:2.
48. 7:46:2.
50. 384. *Śri Vacanabhūṣaṇam*—Edn.1911.
49. 3:83. *Śri Vacanabhūṣaṇam*—Edn. 1911.

A robber escaping from custody may go round a temple or any spiritual environment. Any sinner may call his friend, perhaps as a brother sinner but who in this country is as usual named after God. *Pillai* writes that God in writing the account of this soul gives credit for his having been in a holy environment and for his addressing the Lord by His name—*"En̲ ūraicconnāy, en pēraicconnāy"*.[51]

The same idea is expressed by our poet—*"Poyyē unnaip pukalvār pukalntāl atuvum poruḷāk koḷvānē"*[52]—'Even if those who praise You, do so without sincerity, You take it as sincere and true praise'. *"Anpilārēnum Emperumān enru eppōtum alaitta-varkkaruḷ cey .... atikaḷ"*[53]—'Even if they have no love, You .... bless those who call or utter Your name always'.

3. *Our Poet, Ārūrar*

We explained the working of *karma* as a kind of retribution, reformation, cure and education. When our poet sings of God as 'a cheat unto the cheat,' *"Puḷḷuvarākum avarkku avartāmum Puḷḷuvar"*,[54] *"Ētilār tamakku ētilān"*[55]—'as a stranger to those who look upon Him as a stranger'—there is the idea of retribution—paying them in their own coin. So also he expresses the same idea in the verse No. 60:4, where he speaks of the acts of previous birth inflicting in this birth. The idea of punishment is also there when he says, *"Paṭappāl tanmaiyil nān paṭṭatellām paṭuttāy"*: Here *'paṭuttāy'* means punished or made one undergo.[56] Our poet speaks of the Lord punishing him with blindness.[57] The reformative theory of *karmas* is referred to when God is said to be refining and transmuting the mind and the soul—*"Tiruttit tirutti vanten cintai iṭaṅkoḷ kayilāyā"*.[58] The curative theory, where the conception of *karma* and of all our defects and our ignorance being a disease is also emphasized by our poet when he speaks of *"Pantitta vinaip parraruppān"*[59]—'One who cuts away the fetters of *karma*

51. *Ibid.*
52. 7:41:7.
53. 7:14:9.
54. 7:11:3.
55. 7:56:2.
56. 7:15:6.
57. 7:54:4; 7:69:3; 7:89:1; 7:89:6.
58. 7:47:8.
59. 7:61:8.

in terms of surgery' and of *"Piṇi kaḷaivāy"*[60]—'You who removes the disease in terms of cure'. Our poet calls the misleading desires as cruel disease of desire—*"Vēṭkai Vennōy"*.[61] Identification with the imperfection *'Apūrṇam* and *anyata'* which is want of wholeness is disease and the source of every misery. According to an Indian Saint the greatest illness is the disease of existence. Has not *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* said, *"Piṟapparukkaluṟṟārku uṭampu mikai?"* When the soul turns Godward forgetting its erstwhile identification with the imperfection, and aims at communion with the perfection it enjoys freedom from this disease and the bliss of spiritual health. God is therefore the medicine, *"Maruntaṉār"*.[62] He is the medicine curing the chronic *karma, "Valviṉai tīrkkum maruntu"*,[63] the medicine on the top of the mountain, *"Malaimēl māmaruntu"*.[64] The last reference suggests the idea of *'Sañjīvī'* or a rare medicinal plant. *Maruntu* also means nectar. He is the nectar accompanying us on our journey to salvation—*"Vaḻittuṇai maruntu"*[65] and we saw the Divine Bliss being spoken of as the nectar of *sahasrārā* in the *laya yōga* of *"Ṣaṭcakras"*. The Lord is spoken of as *'Amudu'*—*'Nectar'* by our poet himself.[66]

The *Śaiva Siddhānta* Philosophy coming to the educational theory of *karma* speaks of the Lord creating *'taṉukaraṇa puvaṉa pōkam'*, body, limbs, the world and the objects of enjoyment, for the experience of the soul which has to be purified ultimately and saved through the experiences. This answers to the modern conception of educational institutions where the child is conditioned in the proper way through experiences provided there. The Lord is spoken of by our poet as a *Guru*,[67] *Gurumāmaṇi*[68] and *Ciṭṭaṉ*.[69] Real education according to the *Hindus* is the drawing out of the spirit inside and, therefore, the Lord is the most learned from this point of view — *Paṭṭaṉ*,[70] the learned. The learned or the really educated, from this point of view, always praise Him—*"Periya*

60. 7:29:3.
61. 7:59:2.
62. 7:76.6.
63. 7:75:9.
64. 7:27:3.
65. 7:70:9.
66. 7:58:6; 7:68:7 *etc.*
67. 7:26:4.
68. 7:62:4.
69. 7:69:9; 7:80:8.
70. 7:69:9.

emperumāṉ eṉṟu eppōtum kaṟṟavar paravappaṭuvāṉ".[71] The result of this kind of education or spiritual perfection is the removal of all miseries—"*Kaṟṟa perumpulavar allal peritum aṟuppāṉ*".[72] Education in this sense becomes in the end Divine Bliss—"*Kaṟṟa kalviyiṉum iṉiyāṉ*"[73]—'God is sweeter than education', the means though both are the same because God is the goal and the means. This education or spiritual perfection is not mere theory but an art and an aesthetic experience of God. We had elsewhere explained the artistic mysticism of *Ārūrar* and his conception of Art or '*Kalai*'. From this point of view *Ārūrar* speaks of the Lord being the Art as well as its meaning and significance. He is the fruit of the experience of Art—"*Ēḻicaiyāy icaippayaṉāy*".[74] His All-pervasiveness is brought about by a reference to Art—"*Kalaikkelām poruḷāy*";[75] "*Pāṭṭakat ticai ākiniṉṟāṉ*";[76] "*Paṇṇāriṉ Tamiḻāyp Paramāya Parañcuṭarē*";[77] "*Palkalaiyiṉ poruḷ*".[78]

IV

THE BLISS OF LOVE:

The spiritual process is explained in a still more intimate way. Indian books on rhetoric speak of the dictates of the *Vēdas* as the commandments of the Master to his slave, the *Prabhu Saṁhitā*. They speak of the *Itihāsas* as the counsel friends, the *Suhṛt Saṁhitā* and the *Purāṇas* as the prattling of the child, the *Śiśu Saṁhitā*. Poetry is according to them the captivating speech and request of the beloved, the *Kāntā Saṁhitā*. Naturally *Ārūrar's* conception of Art leads us to this relationship of love between God and Soul as the Lover and the Beloved, which ultimately blossoms as an undivided non-dualistic inseparable experience of union or unity. From this point of view, the Lord is the most beautiful (*Aḻakaṉ*[79] *etc*), and the purest (*Puṉitaṉ*)[80] and (*Niṉmalaṉ*).[81]

71. 7:61:11.
72. 7:73:3.
73. 7:56:5.
74. 7:51:10.
75. 7:59:3.
76. 7:62:3.
77. 7:24:5.
78. 7:62:6.
79. 7:9:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10; 7:64:1 *etc.*
80. 7:9:2, 4, 6, 8, 11.
81. 7:56:11.

Ārūrar addresses Him as *'Alakā'*[82] and *'Alakiyār'*.[83] The Lord is eternal and without end; He is, therefore, to the poet, 'the eternal Youth' (*Kulakan*).[84] To the beloved, He is the bridegroom and the beloved (*Manavālan*),[85] (*Anpan*),[86] (*Ārvan*).[86a]

He is all sorts of relations of varying kinds of love. This can be interpreted in two ways. Since He is All-pervasive, every relation of ours is ultimately God. In another sense, all these relations of which we speak of in this world are unreal and ultimately meaningless and futile, the real, father, mother, brother, sister, son, wife, teacher, friend, king and *Guru* being the Lord and none but Him. We are His wealth and He is the owner—*'Utaiyān'*.[87] He is our Chief or Leader (*Kōn*).[88] He is our *Iraivan* or *Iraiyavan*,[89] the King or the Sovereign. He is the beloved Lord (*Nāyakan*):[90] *Nātan*.[91] In various *hymns* our poet, therefore, addresses the Lord as father, mother, master, the beloved, the brother *etc.*[92] In this also our poet is following closely the footsteps of *Campantar*.[93]

Of all these relationships, that which is the most intimate is that of the beloved. The most intimate experience of the Lord's bliss is often spoken of as *'Amudu'*, the sweetest thing. The *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators bring out the greatness of this conception of *'Ārā Amudu'* which is according to them unique in their mystic language. "Whilst sense enjoyment is exciting and exhausting, the joy of Divine contact expresses the inexpressible joy which is satisfaction without satiation".[94] This term *'Ārā Amudu'* is however not peculiar to *Vaiṣṇavism* but is the common basis of all *Tamil* mystic poetry. *Appar* mentions it.[95] *Ārūrar* calls the Lord

82. 7:1:9; 7:3:6; 7:69:2.
83. 7:87:1-10.
84. 7:58:5; 7:62:7; 7:76:5; 7:77:4.
85. 7:70:4; 7:80:1.
86. 7:38:10.
86a. 7:85:3.
87. 7:91:6.
88. 7:68:2.
89. 7:40:3; 7:73:4; 7:75:1.
90. 7:17:7.
91. 7:84:9.
92. See *hymns* 13, 24, 26, 27, 28, 52, 73, 85.
93. See *Campantar*-3:46.
94. *Nammālvār*: 2:3:1.
95. *Ap.*, 281:1.

'Amudu'—'Nectar';[96] *'Innamudu'*—'Sweet Nectar';[97] *'Āramudu'*[98] which is Insatiable Nectar; *'Ārā Innamudu'*—'the Insatiable sweet Nectar'[99] and *'Kōtilā Amudu'*—'the Nectar free from all dregs'.[100] The Lord is the sweetest experience and for want of words our poet speaks of Him as *'Kannal'*—Sugar,[101] *'Karumpu'*—Sugarcane[102] and *'Katti'*—Sugarcandy[103] and also *'Tēn'*—Honey.[104] *"Pāvippār manattu ūrum at tēn"*,[105] *"Aṭiyārkaḷtam uḷḷat tēn"*,[106] *"Tittikkum tēn"*,[107] *"Karumpin teḷi"*,[108] *"Mannavar ninrettum karumpu"*,[109] *"Teḷi tēn"*,[110] *"Tēniṭai innamudu, marratanirreḷivu"*,[111] *"Kannal innamudu"*[112] are the several metaphorical expressions used by our poet, sweeter by themselves. Of these, the last two expressions are the most sweetest as they mention that our Lord is the most sweetest quintessence of all the sweetest things.

He is not far away. He is the beloved of our soul, ever in its embrace. Therefore, He is like the sweetness of the gooseberry in our very palm—*"Aṅkai nelliyin palattiṭai amudu"*.[113] The bliss of achievement becomes patent to them who contemplate on Him—*"Cintit teḷuvārkku nellikkani"*.[114] But all these fruits of the world are nothing compared to His bliss and therefore our poet speaks of Him as the divine fruit of educational or spiritual perfection—*"Karruḷa vān kani"*.[115] "Think of Him! How sweet is He!"—cries our poet and he further states, "His very name is sweet in our

96. 7:28:2; 7:68:1-9; 7:84:7.
97. 7:21:6; 7:27:2; 7:84:3; 7:84:10.
98. 7:51:2; 7:51:4.
99. 7:26:10; 7:27:7.
100. 7:70:8.
101. 7:84:10.
102. 7:54:3.
103. 7:54:3; 7:59:10.
104. 7:21:6; 7:59:10; 7:68:3.
105. 7:59:10.
106. 7:67:1.
107. 7:68:3.
108. 7:59:10.
109. 7:38:3.
110. 7:70:1.
111. 7:84:3.
112. 7:84:10.
113. 7:54:3.
114. 7:4:3.
115. 7:51:9.

tongue and there sprouts forth the nectar"—*"Nāvilūṟum Naḷḷāṟaṉ; Amudu"*.[116]

The happiness is still further spoken of as *'Iṉpu'* and *'Iṉimai'*. He is the sweet bliss devoid of all miseries—*"Tuṉpamum tuṟantu iṉpiṉiyāṉ"*.[117] "To praise Him is to enjoy the sweet bliss"—thus feel the *Bhaktas* and the *Siddhas*, *"Pattar Cittar paraviṉiyāṉ"*[118] (There is another reading *pariviṉiyāṉ* instead of *paraviṉiyāṉ*). He increases the bliss of those who contemplate on Him. He is the sweetest bliss in communion—*"Tiḷaittaṟku iṉiyaṉ"*[119] *"Eṉak-kiṉiyavaṉ"*[120]—'He is sweet unto me' cries our poet. He is sweet not only to him but also to all his people—*"Tamarkkiṉiyavaṉ"*.[121] He is sweet, not at one moment or once, but all through the seven-fold births—*'Eḻumaiyum'*.[122] He is sweet to our heart—*"Maṉak-kiṉiyavaṉ"*.[123] His all pervasiveness appears as His all pervasive bliss, sweet to the ear, sweet to the eye, sweet to the nose, sweet to the tongue and sweet to the heart of the artist:

"Paṇṇiṭait tamiḻ oppāy paḻattiṉiṟ cuvai oppāy
Kaṇṇiṭai maṇi oppāy kaṭu iruṭ cuṭar oppāy".[124]

"Iḻaikkum eḻuttiṟku uyiṟē ottiyāl
ilaiyē ottiyāl uṉaiyē ottiyāl
Kuḻaikkum payirkkōr puyalē ottiyāl
aṭiyār tamakkōr kuṭiyē ottiyāl".[125]

"Vācattiṉār malark koṉṟai yuḷḷār".[126]

V

ETHICS AND THE ABSOLUTE:

The saint, when he attains realization, transcends thus the wheel of *karma* and ethics. But this is not a negation of moral laws but their fulfilment and transcendence to the higher, more

116. 7:68:3.
117. 7:56:9.
118. 7:62:3.
119. 7:67:1.
120. 7:72:1.
121. 7:72:1.
122. 7:72:1.
123. 7:72:1.
124. 7:29:6.
125. 7:4:4.
126. 7:19:2.

wonderful and more mysterious harmony of the Absolute. Westerners often misrepresent it as a non-moral, if not immoral state. In the Absolute, all the contradictions, all the '*dvandvas*' (dualism) are transcended and harmonized and therefore, it is beyond the '*dvandvas*' like moral and immoral which have meaning only in relation to the desires and activities of the self-conscious mind.

The ascent to the Absolute starts with the purified and moral state. Therefore, there is no question of this path being immoral. *Ārūrar* emphasizes this importance of ethics. He speaks of the removal of the faults, the removal of the angry mind, the false sense of prestige and the vain desire—"*Kūca nīkkik kuṟṟa nīkkic ceṟṟa maṉa nīkki vāca malku kuḻaliṉārkaḷ vañcamaṉai vāḻkkai ācai nīkki*".[127] He also refers to the necessity for conquering or transmuting the six passions.[128] The worshippers are described as those whose mind has become calm, without being disturbed by the heat of the passions—"*Ārum aṉpar*".[129] They are also described as the good—"*Nallavar*";[130] "*Nallaṭiyār*".[131] They are those who have no end—"*Antamillā aṭiyār*".[132] Our poet calls them as those who are devoid of all blots—"*Pācaṟṟavar*";[133] "*Ūṉamillā aṭiyār*"[134] and "*Kuṟṟam il* (*taṉ*) *aṭiyār*"[135]—those free from all faults. They are free from confusion—"*Malakkil* (*niṉ*) *aṭiyār*".[136] They are so attached to Him that they know nothing else—"*Maṭam uṭaiya aṭiyār*".[137] God is pleased with the character and behaviour of those who are capable of worshipping His feet—"*Kaḻal pēṇa-vallār cīlamum ceikaiyum kaṇṭuvappār*".[138]

It is said that doing good to others is the highest *Dharma*. Internal purity engenders this state of mind where this sympathy and pity become almost an instinct. *Rāmānuja* has truly said that he, from whose heart escapes the cry 'alas' at the suffering of

127. 7:7:7.
128. 7:5:8.
129. 7:19:8.
130. 7:56:10; 7:79:10.
131. 7:67:2.
132. 7:81:8.
133. 7:50:7.
134. 7:81:7.
135. 7:84:4.
136. 7:29:8.
137. 7:81:6.
138. 7:19:9.

others can be sure of his salvation. It is, therefore, wrong to assert that *Hinduism* develops selfishness in its spiritual development. It aims not at individual freedom but freedom from individuality—aims at the blossoming of the individual into the universal and the Absolute where there is not mere fretting and weeping but real love for all in that universal consciousness, if one may speak of it in those terms. When this sympathy is absent there is no hope of salvation. When, the feeling of desolation overtakes our saint and he begins to condemn himself, he feels a revulsion at his imagined unsympathetic mind. "The helpless with eyes sunk low come and beg; even then I am not inspired by that power of sympathy"—*"Kaṉ kuḻintirappār kaiyil oṉṟum iṭakkilēṉ"*;[139] "I do not give even an iota to those who beg"—*"Ciṟuc ciṟitē irappārkaṭku oṉṟu īyēṉ"*;[140] "Wealth seems to be dazzling to me and I do not part with it"—*"Koṭukkka kiṟṟilēṉ oṉporuḷ taṉṉai"*.[141] "I have not helped the desperate in any way" —*"Alantārkaḷ oruttarkku utaviyēṉ allēṉ"*.[142]

VI

ĀRŪRAR'S ETHICAL EXCELLENCE:

The importance of the ethical excellence in inspiring the Grace is emphasized by our poet both positively and negatively. God blesses only those who have this moral grandeur[143] and from those who are devoid of this purity and love He hides, not for ever, but till they are transformed.[144] To those rooted in Truth, contemplating and recollecting His glories, He comes as the very Truth and He is untrue unto those who are devoid of this Truth.[145] He increases here and hereafter the happiness of those whose heart melts in love—*"Kacintavarkku immaiyoṭu ammaiyil iṉpam perukkum Nampi"*.[146] He shines as the brilliant light of Truth to those who praise with their tongue Truth itself.[147] He hides from those

139. 7:59:9.
140. 7:60:4.
141. 7:60:7.
142. 7:73:6.
143. 7:19:9.
144. 7:19:5.
145. 7:57:11.
146. 7:63:10.
147. 7:23:9.

whose heart knows no such love or pity.[148] But if those think of Him for a moment with a melting heart, He enters their heart and resides ever taking it as His abode.[149] He is impossible of approach to those who do not come to Him with the loving contemplation.[150] He is the Great and Birthless who never forgets those whose mind is free from deceit.[151] He goes not into the minds of those full of deceit.[152] He does not come even for a moment near the deceitful heart.[153] He is a Cheat unto the cheats[154] — *"Pulḷuvar ākum avarkku avartāmum pulḷuvaṉār"*.[155] Has not *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* said *"Dhyūtam chalayatām asmi?"* — 'I am the dice of the gamblers'.[156] He is there in the mind of those who do not swerve from the right path.[157] He is the beloved of the virtuous — *"Puṇṇiyattār nēcattiṉār"*.[158]

VII

MORAL GRANDEUR OF ŚIVA:

Our poet describes our Lord as the very embodiment of moral grandeur. He not only loves morality in His followers but He is Himself pure, holy and moral and helps his followers to become pure and moral. He is the Truth — *'Meyyaṉ'*.[159] He is the pure — *'Puṉitaṉ'*;[160] the Holy — *'Tīrttaṉ'*.[161] He is the Holy of holies destroying sin — *"Pavittira pāva nācaṉ"*;[162] the very form of virtue — *'Puṇṇiyaṉ* and *Puṇṇiyamāṉāṉ'*.[163] He is pure as the rare *Tapas* or He is the pure in His rare *Tapas* — *"Aruntavattiṟ ṟūyār"*.[164] Our poet's theory of Art or Aesthetics brings out this great Truth. In

148. 7:63:10.
149. 7:11:7, 8, 9.
150. 7:19:10.
151. 7:86:8.
152. 7:19:5.
153. 7:84:7.
154. 7:11:3.
155. *Pulḷuvar* — *Periya Tirumoḻi* — 10:7:4.
156. *Gītā* 10:36.
157. 7:45:5.
158. 7:19:2.
159. 7:57:10; 7:86:7.
160. 7:9:2; 4, 6, 8, 11; 7:57: 11.
161. 7:77:7.
162. 7:31:8.
163. 7:40:2 & 7:96:3.
164. 7:19:10.

the *Tirupputtūr hymn,* he sings of God alternately as *Puṉitaṉ* or the Holy and *Aḻakaṉ* or the Beautiful.[165] The Beautiful Absolute therefore can only be the Purest.

It is not the followers alone that are full of the virtues required for attaining the final release. He is both the goal and the means. In the path of love, He comes like the Beloved to the soul. Therefore, He is also pure, and holy, like His followers. He is not only the Lord and *Pacupati,* but He is like His beloved one, a *Siddha,* a *Mukta* and a *Bhakta,* though conferring *siddhi* and *mukti* on them and worshipped by *Bhaktas, Śaivas* and *Pāśupatas*.[166] The *Brahmajñānis* who have achieved realization of the Absolute are sometimes distinguished as *Brahmavid, Brahmavara, Brahmavarya* and *Brahmavariṣṭa,* and *Śiva,* the Lord is also like the *Brahmavarya,* the *Brahmavariṣṭa* stage being Absolute quiescence.

He is our great prince of *Tapas,* He the Prince, who frowns on the (misleading) five senses — *"Pulanaintum cīṟu Nampi"*.[167] He loves the character and behaviour of others — *"Cīlamum ceykaiyum kaṇṭuvappār"*.[168] His form itself possesses in abundance this virtuous character — *"Cīlantāṉ peritum uṭaiyāṉ"*.[169] He is, therefore, the real attachment unto the true *tapasvins* — *"Paṟṟināṟkkeṉṟum paṟṟavaṉ"*.[170] He is the *Dhārmic saint* — *"Aṟavaṉ"*,[171] *"Aṟavar"*;[172] *"Aṭikaḷ"*,[173] the saint with the eye of *Dharma* — *"Aṟakkaṉ eṉattakum aṭikaḷ"*,[174] the great gem of a master — *"Gurumāmaṇi"*.[175] He is not only the learned,[176] but the leader of good conduct.[177] The phrase *Śiṣṭācāra* speaks of *siṣṭas* as such leaders.

165. *Hymn* 9.
166. *Cittaṉ* — 7:52:1; *Muttaṉ* — 7:52:1; *Pattaṉ* — 7:25:3; 7:52:1; *Mutti taravallāṉ*: 52:1; *Cittittiṟam kāttum Civaṉ*: 7:52:1; *Pattar Cittar palar pōṟṟum Paramaṉ* : 7;52:1; *Caivatta cevvuruvaṉ* : 7:82:7; *Pācupataṉ* : 7:22:6, 8; 7:69: 1-10.
167. 7:63:4.
168. 7:19:9.
169. 7:61:1.
170. 7:61:2.
171. 7:70:6.
172. 7:33:3; 7:34:11.
173. 7:2:2; 7:25:6; 7:76:2, 3, 4, 5, 8.
174. 7:37:2.
175. 7:62:4.
176. *Paṭṭaṉ* — 7:69:9.
177. *Ciṭṭaṉ-ibid.*

He is full of those rare and good attributes and there is no comparison to Him in this respect — *"Oppariya kuṇattāṉ"*.[178] Because of the infinite attributes, He has a thousand names — *"Pēr ōr āyiram"*.[179] These groups of attributes are spoken of as being eight in number. According to the *Jains* these are: 1. Infinite knowledge; 2. Infinite perception; 3. Infinite power; 4. Infinite bliss; 5. Indestructability; 6. Absence of any name; 7. Absence of any class; 8. Absence of any limited life. As pointed out by *Parimēlaḻakar,* the *Śivāgamas* mention these attributes in a different way: 1. Infinite bliss; 2. Infinite power; 3. Infinite Grace; 4. Omniscience; 5. Absolute self dependence relying on none else; 6. Being an embodiment of purity; 7. Being by His own nature free from fetters and 8. Being possessed of Absolute intuitive wisdom. He is, therefore, a mountain of these good qualities — *"Kuṇak-kuṉṟu"*.[180] The same idea is expressed in a negative way. The Absolute is a mountain completely devoid of all evils — *"Tītilā malai"*.[181] *Śiva's* attributes have no faults — *"Kuṟṟamil kuṇat-taṉ"*.[182] He is perfect; His perfection is complete in itself — the Absolute; He is the fullness without any deficiency — *"Kuṟaivilā niṟaivu"*.[183] He is perfect; therefore, there is no question of reforming, rectifying or improving this perfection — *"Tiruttalākātāy"*.[184] He is devoid of all faults — *'Ūṉamili"*[185] or rather devoid of all deficiency. He is without birth which is the basis of all defects. He is *"Uttamaṉ"*[186] the Supreme Being who is possessed of all moral attributes. He is *"Oppariya kuṇattaṉ"* who is second to none in moral perfection. He takes His place, therefore, in the hearts of those who are complete in their ethical perfection.[187] The very term *'Eṇkuṇattāṉ'* is mentioned by our poet to represent our Lord as having all the attributes grouped into eight in accordance with the *Śaivites'* conception (*Eṇkuṇattiṉāṉ*).[188]

178. 7:51:5.
179. 7:56:10.
180. 7:70:6.
181. 7:70:8.
182. 7:86:3.
183. 7:70:6.
184. 7:52:6.
185. 7:97:2.
186. 7:70:3.
187. 7:45:5.
188. 7:40:3.

VIII

SELF CONDEMNATION EXPLAINED:

In a moment of desolation overcoming him, at the sight of the world, especially after his mystic experience of the Lord, our poet often bears on his shoulders the crushing weight of the faults of the world and sings because of this racial memory of the human race, his *hymns* of self condemnation. This self condemnation paints the poet sometimes in the darkest colour, as the very embodiment of all that is immoral. As against *Tapas* and control of the five senses and their sublimation, which all form the path of the Lord, he speaks of his own slavery to the senses and of his being caught within the net spread out by the common women who entice by their beauty.[189] The whole of the 8th *hymn* speaks of his revulsion from this kind of life.

In other places, he exaggerates his faults. He regrets that he cannot transmute the six passions in the path of the Lord.[190] He speaks of this life as a life of falsehood[191] and meanness.[192]

He complains of his vain knowledge and of his behaviour of not walking in the footsteps of the just.[193] He speaks of himself getting fatigued after having wandered like a devil or ghost.[194] He calls himself a liar and a cheat,[195] the hard-hearted who does not love the feet of the Lord, being himself caught within the fetters of confusion,[196] the cruel fool without any wisdom.[197] He speaks of wandering away from the Lord doing all things false.[198]

He continues in this strain: His is a body of dirt;[199] he whirls like the water of the whirlpool and so does his mind;[200] he has not contemplated on the moral conduct and attributes of the Lord.[201]

189. 7:3:5; 7:3:9; 7:26:5; 7:41:8; 7:52:4.
190. 7:5:8.
191. 7:8:9.
192. 7:8:2.
193. 7:15:4.
194. 7:1:2.
195. 7:26:6.
196. 7:35:10.
197. 7:41:8.
198. 7:52:2.
199. 7:54:1.
200. 7:54:5.
201. 7:54:6.

He exclaims in despair : "I cannot escape the misery of the desires; I do not see the path".[202] "I have become fatigued having decided on actions which are not good".[203] "The *karmas* of the past inflict me in this birth and I have wasted my time as an obstinate fool".[204] "I have not learnt the truth of the arts or wisdom. I have done very very cruel acts. Alas ! a sinner ! I have committed many sins".[205] "I cannot leave off the faults of resentment. I revered none and did only improper acts. I wander about, resentful and obstinate".[206]

"I do not speak except in opposition. I am not a help even to those who follow me; alas ! mine is a heart harder than stone".[207] "My path, my knowledge, my attachment, my rule of behaviour, all of these are very bad and cruel. I am fond of tormenting and punishing others. I wander about doing things according to my whims and fancies".[208] "I am fond of wealth; I wander about in vain. I am no help even to any of those who are desperate. I am not an aid even unto those who are attached to me. I have nothing of propriety in me".[209] "I do not care for others or my own people".[210] "To every one I speak in resentment and opposition".[211] "I am not capable of cutting away my manifold desires".[212] "I am a cruel one".[213] "I am an evil one, a hard-hearted one, never doing any act of good, a cruel one passionately attached to whatever is seen".[214]

Our poet sings in this strain only in moments of despair when he feels for the world or when he feels he is away from God. This does not represent the truth about him but only the value he sets on ethics. Having undergone the purgation he is the purest soul, an embodiment of morality. He himself gives expression to his

202. 7:59:9.
203. 7:60:2.
204. 7:60:3; 7:60:4.
205. 7:60:6.
206. 7:69:1.
207. 7:73:3.
208. 7:73:4.
209. 7:73:6.
210. 7:73:9.
211. 7:73:10.
212. 7:73:10.
213. 7:74:1.
214. 7:96:9.

conviction. "I do not think of this body of fat as something permanent. I took refuge only in mind which thinks of you".[215] "I am not proud of this human birth. I shed tears when I think of it".[216] "I do not love anyone but you".[217] "I serve you without fear and what shall I aspire for ?"[218] "I have resolved to reach the ideal to be attained".[219] "I renounced my kith and kin and took refuge in you".[220] "I do not consider my relations as of any help".[221] "I have left off or abandoned this life of worldliness".[222] "I thought of your feet as the real and permanent thing of the world and I became rid of my anger" — *'Calam'*.[223] "Whatever faults I may commit, I shall not commit any unto your feet".[224] "Even if I slip and fall down I know of no other cry but of Your name".[225] "Even if I become fascinated by other things, I shall not commit any fault to your feet and even if I do, I have agreed to undergo all that you can do for me".[226] "I have not known my doing any excess".[227] "I do not remember even a single fault I have committed".[228] "I have not committed any crime".[229] In spite of the five Lords of the senses I tether You to my mind with the garland of words" — *"Aivar kākkiṉum vākkeṉṉum mālai koṇṭu uṉṉai eṉ maṉattu ārkkiṉṟēṉ"*.[230] Is not our poet a *'Paramaṉaiyē pāṭuvār'*?

215. 7:14:8.
216. 7:15:8.
217. 7:15:2.
218. 7:15:3.
219. 7:15:7.
220. 7:21:4.
221. 7:58:2.
222. 7:3:3.
223. 7:21:9.
224. 7:54:1.
225. 7:54:1.
226. 7:54:2.
227. 7:54:7.
228. 7:77:5.
229. 7:95:2.
230. 7:96:4. 1.

PART III

GOD

Introduction

In this part, the final goal is examined. God is love but this conception may lead to an emotional outburst. The *Tamilian* saints including *Arūrar* have emphasized the *'Cit'* aspect of this lover of a Lord and this is examined in the first chapter of this part. In the next chapter, the bridal mysticism of *Ārūrar* is explained as usual starting from a study of the mystics of the world. The great contribution of *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators on *Nālāyiraprabandham* and especially on *Nammālvār's* poems in elucidating the conception of the mysticism of love which is oftentimes erroneously termed erotic mysticism — for mysticism of love or *madhurabhāva* is as far removed from *Eros* as deity from dust, utilized for explaining *Ārūrar's* mysticism of love. The theory that *Śaivism* does not know this kind of *'madhurabhāva'* is proved to be incorrect; a comparison is made between *Kṛṣṇalīla* in the *Brindāvan* and *Ānanda Taṇḍava* and *Bhikṣāṭana* in the *Dārukavana* — almost quoting the very words of Prof. Srinivasachariyar's explanation of *Kṛṣṇaism*. *Ārūrar's* one great *'akappāṭṭu'* (H. 37) is also explained. The *Purāṇic* mysticism which we studied earlier is found to agree with this mysticism.

In the third chapter, *Ārūrar's* description of the final goal is discussed, as the non-dual experience of the Absolute. It is found difficult to proceed further and label him as the follower of any distinct philosophy. We conclude that like all other mystics he believes in the harmony of all religions and philosophies — all the conflicts thereof being dissolved in the final experience of the Absolute, which is everything and which cannot be everything unless all the conflicts are thus harmonized there.

CHAPTER I

THE LIGHT OF LIGHT

I

ILLUMINATION OF LOVE:

The blissful love is not an emotional outburst but the joy of *jñāna* or realization of the Real, the Truth, the God, the Absolute. Therefore, the *Tamilian* Saints are not so emotional as others, for, in them we find a harmony of emotion, wisdom, and moral activity; if at all there is relatively a greater emphasis on *jñāna* it is on *jñāna* as love. This is a realization which is born of firm faith and knowledge devoid of all doubts and erroneous vision. There is the firm resolve of the mind—"*Tiṭaṅkoḷ cintaiyiṉār*",[1] where the Lord removes the doubt—"*Caṅkaiyai nīṅka aruḷi*"[2]—for, otherwise nobody can come near Him; "*Caṅkaiyavar puṉartārkariyāṉ*".[3] When there is this firm conviction and knowledge and unswerving contemplation He dances as they sing—"*Niccayattāl niṉaippuḷārpāl pāṭum kāṭṭil āṭaluḷḷīr*".[4] The Lord is the pure form of true knowledge. All the books of knowledge—"*Āṟaṅkam*", "*Maṟai āṟaṅkam*"[5] are revealed by Him,[6] or He is their very form.[7] Real knowledge as experience rather than as theory is considered to be '*Uram*' or the greatest strength of intellectual conviction born of experience which cannot be removed by any means. '*Uram*' is the word for strength and this has been interpreted by *Piṅkalantai* and commentators on *Tirukkuṟaḷ* which speaks of '*Uraṉ eṉṉum tōṭṭi*'[8] as referring to our knowledge and our poet calls the Lord the only Real which is this strength and spiritual knowledge—"*Uram eṉṉum Poruḷāṉ*".[9]

1. 7:88:2.
2. 7:19:3.
3. 7:10:9.
4. 7:6:9.
5. 7:73:3.
6. 7:63:4.
7. 7:19:4; 7:62:2.
8. Kuṟaḷ—24.
9. 7:86:5.

II

PURGATION AS ILLUMINATION:

Karma and other fetters are from one point of view fetters of ignorance and darkness, a darkness which disappears when this light of divine knowledge blazes forth—*"Tolviṉai tīrkkiṉra cōti";*[10] *"Iruḷaṟuttaruḷum tūya cōti":*[11] These references imply that the saint is equating *"Viṉai"* and *"Iruḷ"* probably as effect and cause. *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* speaks of *"Iruḷ cēr iruviṉai"*[12] and *"Iruḷ nīṅki iṉpam payakkum".*[13] That cause or the seed of all the miseries is described as *"Kaṭu iruḷ"*[14]—'the terrific darkness' and the Lord Himself as the *"Kaṭu iruṭcuṭar"*[15]—"the light within this darkness or the light which dispels this darkness" — a phrase which by the way will appeal to the psychologists like Jung. The real is obscured in this darkness and therefore the name and form of the various things in the world are but a kind of darkness hiding from vision the Reality; this darkness is torn away by the pure light of real knowledge which is the brightness of the Absolute — *"Coṟpatapporuḷ iruḷaṟuttaruḷum tūya cōti".*[16]

III

ARŪRAR'S LIGHT:

This is how the path of purgation becomes the path of illumination which we see is also the path of love. God is the only great Light for all the eight points of the compass — *"Eṇṭicaikku oru cuṭar".*[17] Light, flame, brightness are all various ways of describing real knowledge which is the form of God as Cit, for, even the *Vēdas* express the inexpressible, only through similes and metaphors as, *"Curutiyārkkum collavoṇṇāccōti";*[18] *"Ñānaviḷakkoḷi",*[19] *"Cōti",*[20] *"Tikaḻ oḷi",*[21] *"Cōti eṉum cuṭar",*[22]

10. 7:12:9.
11. 7:68:6.
12. *Kuṟaḷ* 5.
13. *Kuṟaḷ* — 352.
14. 7:29:6.
15. 7:29:6.
16. 7:68:6.
17. 7:72:10.
18. 7:7:10.
19. 7:84:9.
20. 7:62:7.
21. 7:70:7.
22. 7:40:3.

"Parañcōti".[23] The idea of this Absolute Light being also the Blissful Absolute is described poetically as *"Amararkkiṉiya cōti"*;[24] the idea of Absolute Beauty is expressed as *"Cuntaraccōti"*.[25] It is eternal, never going out — *"Nontā oṇcuṭar"*.[26] It is the Truth of truth, the Light of all lights — *"Cōtiyirc̲ōti"*,[27] though one however great may not see that Light of all lights by egoistic self effort, even when searching through the great lights—*"Cuṭar mūṉr̲ilum oṉr̲it turuvi māl piramaṉ ar̲iyāta Māttāṉ"*.[28] Its purity and holiness are referred to as *"Mācar̲u cōti"*.[29] That the Absolute does not depend upon anything else is spoken of in terms of a self luminous light — *"Tūṇṭā viḷakkiṉ nar̲cōti"*.[30] That it transcends everything else, even the lights of the world and the soul is brought out by the phrase, *"Parañcuṭar"*;[31] and *"Parañcōti"*.[32]

IV

LIGHT SEES LIGHT :

According to the Hindu theory of perception, the like alone can perceive the like. The tongue tastes the element water because the tongue itself is a form of this element. The eye is a form of the element of fire and that is why it perceives light and fire. If there is the experience of 'Cit' or real knowledge it is experienced by that 'Cit' or real knowledge itself. For, there is no duality in that experience. He is the eye of our eye, the eye of our mind and the eye of our soul and the eye of the real experience of true knowledge — *"Ñāṉakkaṇ"*.[33] Thus is expressed His All Pervasiveness and His being the quintessence of everything, physical, mental and spiritual — *"Kaṇṇāy ēḻulakum karuttāya aruttamumāy"*.[34]

23. 7:12:4.
24. 7:64:1.
25. 7:92:6.
26. 7:58:1.
27. 7:73:5.
28. 7:67:4.
29. 7:84:3.
30. 7:52:3.
31. 7:69:1-10.
32. 7:12:4.
33. 7:41:8.
34. 7:24:5.

V

SELF LUMINOUS:

Lord is self luminous as this real knowledge. He is within our mind and is everything and when the darkness disappears through *Tapas* of cutting and polishing the gem of a heart, He blazes forth as the beautiful light of that great gem. Our poet calls Him as *"Māmaṇiccōṭiyāṉ"*[35]—a phrase used by Appar and explained by him in his famous verse *"Virakiṟṟīyiṉaṉ"*.[36] This simile of a gem brings out not only the self luminous aspect but also its precious worth as the ultimate value and also the aspect of bliss because it is only endearing things and persons of love that are metaphorically spoken of as precious gems. He is the great precious gem of beautiful colour — *"Kurumāmaṇi"*.[37] Here is a pun on the word *'kuru'* which means when read as *Guru*, the spiritual master. The Lord is therefore the great precious gem of a master. Our poet is very fond of the precious stone — *"Māṇikkam"* — the red carbuncle (a ruby-like red stone but considered to be self luminous in the light of which the serpent as its owner is said to go about in darkness in search of its prey). He calls God the rare gem, *"Arumaṇi"*;[38] the beautiful and wealthy gem — *"Tirumaṇi"*,[39] the great gem — *"Māmaṇi"*,[40] good gem — *"Naṉmaṇi"*,[41] the great gem of the *Dēvas* — *"Vāṉōr māmaṇi"*.[42] The purity which appeals to our poet inspires him to describe the Lord as *"Mācilāmaṇi"*.[43] He calls the Lord *'muttu'* or pearl, gold and *'Cempoṉ'*—pure gold.[44] He rolls into one, these ideas of precious gem and of the precious metal and speaks of the Lord as *'Poṉmāmaṇi'*.[45] The Lord is all pervasive, towering head and shoulders over others; therefore, our poet calls Him *"Māṇikkattiṉ malai"*,[46] the mountain of carbuncle; *"Kaṉakamāl varai"*[47]—

35. 7:81:3.
36. 7:204:10.
37. 7:62:4.
38. 7:40:7.
39. 7:40:7.
40. 7:40:7.
41. 7:38:2, 7:83:7.
42. 7:58:8.
43. 7:68:5; 7:69:5; 7:70:9.
44. 7:40:7.
45. 7:48:9.
46. 7:53:1.
47. 7:68:6.

the mountain of gold, an idea which elsewhere our poet brings out through the words, *"Paramēṭṭi"*,[48] *"Paramaṉ"*,[49] *"Paramāya paramparaṉ"*,[50] *"Periyaperumāṉ"*,[51] *"Māttāṉ"*.[52] *"Māttāṉ"* may also mean He who is the Lord of *Mahat*, the evolving *Pṛkṛti*.

VI

TRANSCENDENTAL LIGHT:

He transcends everything else and all forms of ordinary knowledge. He is realized as an experience through intuition or mystic *'ananyabhāva'*. Therefore, He is described as One who has no equal or comparison, One who has no relation — *"Oppamarāccempoṉ"*,[53] *"Taṉṉoppilāṉ"*,[54] *"Iṇaiyili"*,[55] *"Uravili"*.[56] That He transcends other kinds of knowledge excepting mystic experience or *Brahmānubhava* is also brought out by our saint in a most poetic way — *"Oṉṟāvaṟivoṇṇā Mūrti"*.[57] He is the Lord of the form which cannot be known as anything distinct and which cannot be classified according to our ordinary sources of our knowledge. It is impossible to produce any evidence — *"Cāṉṟu kāṭṭutaṟkariyavaṉ"*.[58] God or Absolute is not something objective like the things of the world. It is the pure experience and that is why it is impossible to produce any objective evidence:

> *"Ētukka ḷālum eṭutta moḻiyālum mikkuc*
> *Cōtikka vēṇṭā cuṭarviṭṭuḷaṉ eṅkaḷ cōti*
> *Mātukkam nīṅka luṟuvīr maṉampaṟṟi vāḻmiṉ*
> *Cātukkaḷ mikkīr iṟaiyē vantu cārmiṉkaḷē"*

says *Campantar*:[59] "God is impossible to be reached even through contemplation by the mind; for, mind is but matter". *"Acattila taṟiyātu"* is *Śivajñānabōdham*.[60] He transcends matter. Even the

48. 7:70:8.
49. 7:64:6.
50. 7:27:1.
51. 7:53:1-9.
52. 7:67:4.
53. 7:83:7.
54. 7:68:1.
55. 7:51:5.
56. 7:97:2.
57. 7:57:6.
58. 7:67:10.
59. 3:54:8.
60. *Sūtram* 7.

Vēdas cannot describe Him positively because He transcends all words: *"Curutiyārkkum collavoṇṇāc cōti"*.[61] Even people who have reached higher spheres cannot measure Him, measure His infinity. He is a rarity to them — *"Amararkkariyān̲"*.[62]

VII

CONTRADICTIONS RESOLVED:

The insoluble philosophical problems relating to God from the point of view of ordinary knowledge lead to series of contradictions which are all however harmonized and solved in the real experience of the Absolute. With reference to the *Bhikṣāṭana* form, the form of a beggar, this problem is mooted and the final solution of the real experience is given. "He becomes the beggar because He has nothing. Further He has become the beggar because He has everything" — *"In̲r̲iyē ilarāvar; Uṭaiyarāy ilarāvar"*.[63] He is everything in the sense He is the basis, the *adhiṣṭhāna*, the quintessence. He has nothing because none of these — the forms and names — is His true self — *"In̲r̲iyē ilarāvarō, an̲r̲i uṭaiyarāy ilarāvarō?"*.[64] He is the eternal youth — *"Kuḻakan̲"*,[65] but yet the most ancient person — *"Paḻaiyan̲"*.[66] There is no beginning or end but He is the beginning of everything. He is the root, the true cause in its entirety and the overlord of everything: *"Ādi"*;[67] *"Mūlan̲"*;[68] *"Mutalvan̲*;[69] *"Muḻumutal"*.[70]

That these contradictions and conflicts being ultimately resolved in a higher harmony is attempted to be explained by another simile — *"Akaramutalin̲ eḻuttāki nin̲r̲āy"*[71]—a simile used by *Tiruvaḷḷuvar*.[72] '*A*' is the first of the alphabet and God is the first of all the things trancending everything. In another sense the letter '*A*' is the natural sound, first coming out when the mouth is opened.

61. 7:7:10.
62. 7:68:7.
63. 7:33:3.
64. 7:33:3.
65. 7:40:8; 7:58:5; 7:82:7; 7:81:9.
66. 7:86:9.
67. 7:1:5; 7:61:1; 7:92:4.
68. 7:12:3.
69. 7:12:3; 7:77:6.
70. 7:51:8.
71. 7:3:2.
72. *Kuṟaḷ* 1.

The other sounds are its variations, produced by various kinds of obstructions in the organs of articulation. So also God as the basis of everything is the only pure self luminous thing; the other forms of the world are its *Vikṛti* or transformations due to obstructions or veils. From this point of view all the letters are His form as the form—the '*Vikṛtaṉ*'.[73] But this may not satisfy the dialectics. This is poetry; and our saint is a poet giving expression to his experience aiming at no philosophical explanation.

73 7:42:1-10.

CHAPTER II

BRIDAL MYSTICISM

I

LOVE :

The path of purgation is not only a path of illumination but it is ultimately the path of Bliss. It is very significant that the final stage of spiritual realization is called *Śivabhōga* in *Śaivism.* The final *jñāna* is looked upon as the blossoming of Love. *Brahmajñāna* is *Brahmānubhava.* The significant words used by our poet in this connection are *"Kātal"*,[1] *"Aṉpu"*.[2] All these suggest the relationship of ideal lovers. This spiritual realization becomes a story of love of the soul, the betrothed becoming the wedded love, losing itself in the embrace and rapture of union with the Lord. The artistic mysticism uses this metaphor of Love, which, therefore, is sometimes erroneously spoken of as erotic mysticism. But it must be noted that there is nothing carnal or degrading about this love though there is the use of the language of sex. It is spiritualized love and there is no other way of expressing the inexpressible. *Kāntābhāva* (*Kaṟpu*) is the experience of the bride and the bridegroom. *Madhura Bhāva* (*Kaḷavu*) is the experience of clandestine love. But all these are metaphors and symbols; for the Real transcends all these.

II

LANGUAGE OF MYSTICISM—MARRIAGE :

This way of explaining the spiritual experience is another universal characteristic of the mystics. The divine union is according to Plotinus, the real marriage of which the marriage of earthly lovers — a blending and communion with each other — is a copy. The Psalms sing in the same strain : "My Beloved is mine and I am He" is their song of union almost amounting to identity.

1. 7:6:7; 7:41:9.
2. 7:86:1; 7:94:9

The Christian mystic, St. Bernard, speaking in the same language of love refers to the spiritual marriage with Jesus who is the real Bridegroom of the soul.[3] Henry Suso looks upon God as Love.[3a] John of Ruysbroek describes the ladder of love where there are touches and tastes of divine love as a result of which the soul is consumed and purified by this fire of love when this meeting of lovers — the Soul and God — ripens into the Bliss of union, only to be followed by the wretchedness of separation inspiring a God hunger in the soul which is finally appeased in the Beatific vision after the complete purification of the soul.[3b] St. Teresa (her autobiography) has experienced the ecstasy of the spiritual marriage with Jesus, the Bridegroom in which all fleshy feelings were ravished away and where all the faculties were suspended, when all sense of separation was swallowed up.[4] St. John of the Cross sings thus of this marriage of delight:

"Upon my flowery breast
Wholly for Him and save Himself for none
There did I give sweet rest
To my beloved One."[5]

According to him, like a drop of water mingled in wine, like glowing iron becoming firelike and like air flooded with sunlight, the soul is transformed and deified in the unitive stage. Walter Hilton or Hylton awakens Christ sleeping in his heart when reason becomes Light and will become Love as a result of self naughting; whereafter comes the waking sleep of the spouse followed by the tasting of the heavenly savour.[6] Juliana of Norwich naughtens the visible things for the vision of God where the love between the soul and God is never dissected and where the wounds of love become the divine healing of worship.[7]

3. *Western Mysticism by Dom Cuthbert Butler, Canticle lxi.* 2, *p.* 141—*Second edition,* 1926.

3a. *Christian Mysticism by W. R. Inge, p.* 173, *Edn.* 1899.

3b. *Orda spiritualium nuptiarum referred to on p.* 169, *Christian Mysticism, ibid.*

4. See *Christian Mysticism, ibid. p.* 218 *ff.*

5. His poem *'The Obscure Night of the Soul'.*

6. *The Scale of Perfection, Christian Mysticism, W. R. Inge, ibid, p.* 197 *ff.*

7. *Christian Mysticism, ibid. P.* 201 *ff.*

In Islamic Sufism or mysticism, we find the use of the symbolism of wine, kisses and embraces which signify the spiritual love and raptures of communion. Rabia of Basra, the Moslem St. Teresa, loses herself in union with the eternal beauty of God, like *Āṇḍāl* and *Mīrābāi* of our land. Hallaj, the Saint of Baghdad sings, "I have become He that I love and He that I love has become myself" and his explanation of his experience is that the Divine I lives in the void of egoistic I, but when egoism is destroyed by Grace and a real intimacy develops between the self and God as the lover and the Beloved, an intimacy that is a burning endearment which is more mine than myself; where the intellect, under the influence of love becomes intuition and love, ripens into ecstasy and God intoxication, all this love of the soul being love for love's sake, love for God Himself and not even for its experience as of the ecstasy of divine union, this Love finally leading to the Beatific vision of God in paradise; where rapt in Divine love the mystic is transformed into God. Jalal-ud-din Rumi, the great Sufi describes the reciprocity of love and transcendental union after its renunciation of sense life and its going away beyond the intellect and he sings:[8]

"With Thy Sweet Soul, this soul of mine
Hath mixed as Water doth with Wine.
Who can the Wine and Water part,
Or me and Thee when we combine?

Thou art become my greater self;
Small bounds no more can me confine.
Thou hast my being taken on,
And shall not I now take on Thine?

Me Thou for ever hast affirmed,
That I may ever know Thee mine.
Thy Love has pierced me through and through,
Its thrill with Bone and Nerve entwine.

I rest a Flute laid on Thy lips;
A lute, I on Thy breast recline.
Breathe deep in me that I may sigh;
Yet strike my strings, and tears shall shine".

8. *The Festival of Spring by him, Translation p. 10.*

It is because of this that *Tirumūlar* identifies Love with the Lord. Love is deified; Shelley sings:

> *"Love wrapped in its all dissolving power*
> *I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt*
> *His presence flow and mingle with my blood*
> *Till it became His life and His grew mine*
> *And I was thus absorbed"*

III

LANGUAGE OF SEX:

The language of sex is appropriate but must be interpreted as having a spiritual meaning. Edward Ingram Watkins[9] in explaining the Catholic mystic languages emphasized the fact that the male element is operative, active, and directive, whilst the feminine is responsive and receptive thus each being complementary to or co-operating with God. To Coventry Patmore, the mystic poet, a true woman is God's image infusing clod with purity. The Christian mystic Richard of St. Victor,[10] speaks of four stairways of love: (1) the betrothal where the soul thirsts for the Beloved; (2) the marriage, where the Absolute leads the soul as its bride; (3) wedlock, where the soul is oned with God and transfigured into Him and the (4) the copulation or union when the soul is caught up to divine delight. According to Miss Underhill, the simile of marriage and the embrace is a parallel on a lower level to the consummation of mystic love owing to the virtues of mutuality, irrevocableness and intimacy, the well known marks of ancient marriage.[11]

IV

HINDUISM: 1. *KĀMA*:

The bridal mysticism is explained at length by the commentators on *Nammāḻvār's* poems. The *Cañkam* literature has idealized love; its poetry of love is the poetry of the noumenon. *Āḻvārs* and *Nāyaṉmārs* speak this language of love in giving expression to their mystic experience. *Kāma*, there, is not *viṣaya kāma* or sensual passion, it is the *Bhagavat Kāma*, spiritual love. "*Kaṇṇa-*

9. See his *Philosophy of Mysticism*, *Edn.* 1919, *P.* 330 *ff.*
10. "*De Quatuor Gradibus Violentae Charitatis*" and *Mysticism*, *by Underhill, Twelfth Edition Revised, p.* 139.
11. *Mysticism by Miss Underhill, ibid, p.* 138.

nukkē ām atu kāmam" is the *Vaiṣṇavite* explanation.[12] That is, "To love Lord *Kṛṣṇa* and none else is real love". *Viṣaya kāma* is an inverted shadow in water of the real *Ātmakāma.* When, therefore, instincts are harmonized and spiritualized they become the eternal creative expression of Divine Love. The *Īṭu* (the classic commentary on *Nammāḻvār*) refers to the conversation occurring in the *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* between the *Saint Yājñavalkya* and his wife *Maitrēyī* when the *Ṛṣi* develops and generalizes the reply of his wife: "Verily is the husband dear, not for the love of the husband but for the love of *ātma.* Everything is dear not for the love of everything but for the love of *ātma* is everything dear. The *ātma* should be reflected on and realized".[13] This is also the meaning of *Appar's* statement, *"Eṉṉilum iṉiyaṉ oruvaṉ uḷaṉ....Iṉṉampar Īcaṉē"*[14] 'There is One (the Lord *Iṉṉampar*) dearer to me than myself'.

2. *BEAUTY* :

The importance of the conception of God as Beauty becomes significant when the Lord steals our hearts *"Uḷḷam kavar kaḷvaṉ"*[15] and *Paṭiṟaṉ*[16] when He as the *Puruṣōttama,* where all souls become His Beloved in love with Him, a love which transcends even the love of the husband and wife. Every soul according to *Mīrā Bāi* (born in 1499 in *Mārwar*) is eternally feminine and she cries, "Why callest thou man as man? There is only One He, and that is God". The *Bhagavat Kāma* is beyond the married love of the world. There may be in this world the feasts to our five senses but the mind which has attained equanimity seeks for the Lord beyond these five Lords (the senses) even as *Draupati* has said.[17] The husband is forgotten because of the love of the real Husband or *Puruṣōttama.* This language of clandestine love or extra marital love is not a negation and cancellation of human marriage but a transcendence. Being on two different levels there is no conflict or moral deterioration. Once this is realized, sex is understood as the magical desire,[18] of the Divine Lover, the artist, the divine

12. *Ramānuja Nūṟṟantāti,* by *Tiruvaraṅkattamutaṉār, v.* 40
13. *iv.i.6.*
14. 134:1.
15. *Campantar* 1:1:1.
16. *Ārūrar* 7:86:2, 3, 4, 7.
17. *Villi Bhāratam, Paḷam poruntu carukkam* in *Araṇya Parvam Verse* 21.
18. *Kiṟi of Ārūrar* — 7:78:2.

charmer[19] by which the animal instinct and lust are transmuted into divine intuition.

3. *THE LOVING COUPLE*:

God is Love and it is a dynamic love abhorring its solitude and hankering after union with Soul. The *Bṛhad Araṇyaka Upaniṣad* explains this truth in the form of a story.[20] "*Brahman* was alone before creation as the *Sat* without a second as "*Ēkākī*" and was not pleased. Aloneness gave it no joy; He desired a second and He divided Himself into twain". He became *Śrīyahpati,* the Lord of *Śrī,* the Mother of the *Vaiṣṇavites;* He became *Ardhanārī* (half male and half female) of the *Śaivites.* The cosmic drama depends on this self division into loving pairs.[21]

4. *ITS SIGNIFICANCE*:

Prof. Srīnivāsāchāriyār brings out the importance of this conception: "To say that God creates the world out of nothing or that He makes it as a potter makes pots is meaningless and mechanical. Likewise, the view of the dialecticians who dissect living Reality into contradictions of thesis and antithesis and then unite them as synthesis is a mere metaphysical abstraction. When they say that the 'one' opposes itself as two and then reposes in itself, that the one enters into its opposite and then returns to itself and that the ego opposes itself as the non-ego and then returns to itself, they start with contradictions and fail to co-ordinate them. But the *Vēdāntic* view of God as Love avoids the defects of theism and monism and affirms that God as love is dual existentially and non-dual in experience. It is the Divine art of creational spontaneity which may be portrayed through the aesthetic language of poetry, music and dancing and the symbology of *sṛṅgāra rasa.* Rhyme has more value in the mystic plane than reason".[22] Prof. Srīnivāsāchāriyār's explanation is noteworthy.

V

BHŌGA AND YŌGA:

While mystic experience may be gained by the way of *Yōga* or *Bhōga* (ascetic introversion or hedonistic extroversion), the

19. *Patiṟaṉ* — 7:86:2, 3, 4, 7.
20. 1.iv.3.
21. See *Appar: hymn,* 3.
22. *Mystics and Mysticism, pp.* 298-99.

way of *Bhōga* or aesthetic religion has an irresistible appeal to the mystic who follows the method of *Bhagavatkāma*. The Lord is a *Yōgi* to the *yōgi* and a *Bhōgi* to the *bhōgi*[23] and followers of God follow both the paths of worshipping the Lord. *Campantar* says of God in his marriage hymn: "*Pōkattaṉ yōkattaiyē purintāṉē*."[24] *Nampi Ārūrar* sings of the followers of God:

> "*Pulkiyum tāḻntum pōntu tavam ceyyum*
> *Pōkarum yōkarum pularivāy mūḻkac*
> *Cellumā Kāviri*".[25]

Our poet calls both the *Bhōgis* and *Yōgis* as *Tapasvins* and therefore the *Bhōgis* are those who enjoy *Bhagavatkāma*.

VI

VAIṢṆAVISM :

But it is very unfortunate that this *Bhōga* method as *Śivakāma* has not been so very well emphasized. *Bhagavatkāma* is a phrase well known. *Śivakāma* is not so very well known though the Mother Goddess as the embodiment of this love is known as *Śivakāmi* inspiring the very Dance of *Śiva*. It is because this explanation of *Śaivism* is not so well known as it deserves, that the great exponent of *Hindu* mysticism, Prof. Srīnivāsāchāriyār distinguishes *Śrī Vaiṣṇavism* from *Śaivism* and classifies the latter with Christianity and Islam as those knowing not this method of *Bhōga*. He writes in his "*Mystics and Mysticism*", "In organized Christianity, Islam and Theistic *Śaivism*, God is the Holy and devotional mysticism is aroused by the creator-creature feeling and it does not foster affinity."[26] The distinguishing feature of *Śrī Vaiṣṇavism* and its importance are well brought out by the learned Professor: "But, in *Śrī Vaiṣṇavism*, especially in the incarnational mysticism of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, God is Beauty and the bridal mystic is captivated by direct contact with Him. The *ṛṣis* of *Daṇḍakāraṇya* were so much smitten with the beauty of *Rāma* the Righteous that they were born as *Gōpīs* of *Bṛndāvaṉ* to relish His beauty and revel in it. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* is the Holy of Holies (*yōgēśvara*) without any touch or taint of sensuality and sin; but He humanizes

23. *Śivajñānacittiyār*-1.50.
24. 3:125:7.
25. 7:74:3.
26. *Mystics and Mysticism*, p. 303.

Himself, as it were, and plays the game of love in the eternal spiritual world of *Brindāvan* with a view to destroying the *tṛṣṇās* or thirsts of the flesh and divinizing the human finites. Why the Absolute divides itself into finite centres and why there is so much ignorance, evil and ugliness of bad *karma* and *kāma* in the world are questions that admit of no solution; but mysticism has dissolved the problem by transmitting lust into love and *tṛṣṇa* into *Kṛṣṇa* as is witnessed in the lives of mystics like *Śuka*".[27]

VII

AKAPPAṬṬU—SONG OF LOVE:

This characteristic feature so very well emphasized in relation to *Śrī Vaiṣṇavism* is not foreign to *Śaivism*. The *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators bring out the beauty of the *Akappāṭṭus* or love songs of *Ālvārs* by renaming the saints as feminine poetesses: *Parāṅkuśa Nāyaki (Tirumaṅkai Ālvār)*, *Śathakōpa Nāyaki (Nammāḻvār)* and *Kulaśēkhara Nāyaki (Kulaśēkhara Āḻvār)*. The *Śaivite* saints who have also composed *Akapporul hymns* in a similar strain may, very well be renamed as *Jñānasambanda Nāyaki*, *Vāgīśa Nāyaki (Tirunāvukkaracar)*, *Sundara Nāyaki (Ārūrar)* and *Māṇikka Vācaka Nāyaki*. That this *Bhōga mārga* or aesthetic religion of *Śivakāma* is not unknown to *Śaivites;* we have shown with the help of references from our poet and *Campantar*. The bridal mysticism of our saint is beautifully brought out in *Ārūrar's hymn* in No. 37, and we have tried to explain the *hymn* in the light of *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators — the very commentators whom our *Āchāriyār* follows.

VIII

THE PLAY OF LOVE:

It is separation or *viślēṣa* that is sung in this *hymn* though we get glimpses of the erstwhile union or *saṁślēṣa*. What our Professor states about this *līla* of love, this drama of *saṁślēṣa* and *viślēṣa*, union and separation, may form an appropriate introduction to the said *hymn* of *Ārūrar*:

"*Bhaktirasa* becomes ripe in the process of what is known as the game of love or *saṁślēṣa* and *viślēṣa*. The Lord plays hide and seek with the beloved soul. *Saṁślēṣa* is the joy of union and *viślēṣa* is the sorrow of separation in the 'dark night of the

27. *Mystics and Mysticism*, p. 303.

soul'; it is the school of suffering love. The joy of contacting God is momentary in this world of *līlā* and it becomes secure and stable only in the world beyond. In the alternation between *saṁślēṣa* and *viślēṣa*, the soul is freed from sensuality and egoity and yearns for the dawn of unitive consciousness. There is light on the path caused by visions and voices; but they are only stepping stones and not stopping places. It is by wise introversion in the state of *viślēṣa* that the soul, which is the bride, distinguishes between what is momentary and what is eternal and renounces its egocentric feeling of 'my' and 'mine' and is purged of pride. Humiliation from without fosters inner humility and the spirit of resignation and in the state of anguish caused by the sense of separation, the bride lapses into depression and despair. The Lord of Love also suffers from the woes of loneliness and yearns for communion with the beloved. In the rapture of reunion, each rushes into the arms of the other and reflection expires in ecstasy. But the joy does not last long as the roots of self-feeling are not yet destroyed and the bride-soul is enchanted by the physical beauty of the Lord and mistakes appearance for reality and vision for the home. Once again there is withdrawal followed by a sense of gloom and this time the bride-soul gives up its passivity and protests and rebukes the Lord for His cruelty and caprice in causing unmerited suffering to the victim and finally there is the onset of divine union. The two become united and are immersed in the joy of communion. The symbolic language employed by the mystics in terms of spiritual marriage is entirely free from morbidity or erotomania. What is *bhagavatkāma* is transempirical, and it is described analogically as *viṣaya kāma;* but the resemblance between them is like that between the dog and the dog star. It is only the pure in heart that are free from sexuality and carnality who can appreciate the value of *bhakti rasa.* As *Śrī Śuka,* the pure-hearted who has specialized in the art of Divine love, reminds us in the *Bhāgavata,* even a man who has but a few glimpses of *Kṛṣṇa-prēma* attains *mukti*".[28]

IX

TRANSCENDENTAL LOVE:

Kāntā bhāva or married relationship is transcended by the *Madhura bhāva* or clandestine love. The *Rāsa līlā of* the *Gōpīs*

28. *ibid. pp.* 304-305.

is the most beautiful conception — the Lord dancing with every soul. The *Bhikṣāṭana* form is something similar. The *Dārukavana* takes the place of *Bṛndāvana.* What the proud Seers of the learned world failed to realize, the eternal feminine in their wives realized and experienced. Their hearts and souls transcended the *viṣayakāma* stage; bewitched by the beauty of the Holy of Holies the *Yōgēśvara,* they followed Him. The phrases suggesting extra marital love and clandestine love are used; but there is nothing carnal. Theirs is not a physical hankering, an animal passion or even a human affinity; it is *Bhagavatkāma, Śivakāma* or spiritual love which *Maitrēyī* confessed to her Lord and husband *Yājñavalkya.* The innocent women, all of them, become *Śivakāmis. Bhikṣāṭana* has no touch of sensuality or sin. The wonderful consummation is the conversion of the rebelling saints of *Dārukavana* and their dancing in the end with the Dance of *Śiva.* The evil which grows in their heart and from out of their sacrifice of fire, takes the shape of terrible, cruel and deadly forms but all these become the ornaments and decorations of the Lord thus suggesting that evil is only misplaced Good, a topsy turvydom, of our activities, turning selfish instead of being offerings to the Lord. It also brings out the doctrine of God's Grace, which saves anyone and everyone and where every feeling however sinful becomes purified and deified, once it is turned towards the Lord, a truth proclaimed by the *Bhāgavata,* "whoever turns his *kāma* (lust), *krōdha* (anger), *bhaya* (fear), *snēha* (comradeship), *aikya* (the feeling of identity) and *Bhakti* (devotion) to *Hari* by contacting Him is deified or transformed into His nature (*tanmayī*)".[29] "Even our faults you hold them as our merits"[30] — so sings our poet and refers to the stories like that of the anger of the *asuras* of *Tripura.* The anger and jealousy of the *Ṛṣis* of *Dārukavana* have been converted into love. The Lord dances adorned with all the deadly things they hurled at Him. The Beauty opens their eyes and they also dance in joy.

X

KṚṢṆA AND BHIKṢĀṬANA:

Prof. Srīnivāsāchāriyār states, "In the mystic realm of *Kṛṣṇaism* there is no such defect or deprivation as radical evil

29. *Bhāgavata-xxix*-15.
30. 7:69:6.

or original sin. No one, not even an *asura* is so depraved as to be deprived of Divine redemptive Love. If man does not mount up to God by *vairāgya* and *jñāna,* God descends to the human level and deifies him by His Divine touch".[31] Is this not true of the *Bhikṣāṭana* form and may we not call *Ārūrar's* mystic way, *Bhikṣāṭanaism?* This story of *Bhikṣāṭana* points out that even *Ṛṣis* may become proud and not self surrender and love, may mislead the soul. The story starts with the *Kāpāli* form, the Hound of Heaven hotly pursuing us; it becomes the bewitching *Bhikṣāṭana* form begging for our souls crossing our way and making love to us and blossoms up into the form of the eternal dance of *Naṭarāja.* These have been explained earlier in our study of our poet's *purāṇic* mysticism. *Bhikṣāṭana* form has been found to be the motif of *Ārūrar's poetry.* What our Professor says as forcefully and beautifully of *Bṛndāvan* and *Kṛṣṇa līlā* is word for word applicable to the *Dārukavana* and *Śivatāṇḍava,* by merely changing the proper names. The passage reads as follows with the *change* of the proper names:

"To the philosopher, the world is *māyā* or the riddle of thought; but to the *bhakta* it is *Śivamāyā* or crammed with *Śiva* love; *Dārukavana* is not merely the headquarters of cosmic Beauty and bliss but is the 'eternal now' in spaceless space in which what is beyond shines as indwelling love in the heart of every *jīva*".[32] (May we add in the *Daharākasa* of the heart?).

"In that exalted state of mystic union transcending the imperfect moods of prayer and praise, voices and visions, there was no thought of anything, as every thought was lost in enjoyment. There was no sense of unity or duality though the distinctions remained and it was the very acme of *Brahmānanda.* The whole universe felt the rhythm and the *rasa* par excellence of the *Ānanda Tāṇḍava* (may we add, following the love escapade of *Bhikṣāṭana*) and danced to the Divine tune like the notes of a symphony. The *līlā* of *Brahman the* God-head as the cosmic dance as *Trimūrti* is the play of the Static *'Sat'* in the dynamic many which only the mystics as *Ṛṣis, Ṛṣipatnīs* or the other seers can realize. *Ānanda Tāṇḍava* of the Beggar God (may we add, inspired by the love of all souls represented as *Śivakāmi*) reveals the all pervasive

31. *Mystics and Mysticism,* p. 172.
32. *Ibid.,* p. 306.

divine love in the attractions of the atoms, the dance of the planets gravitating round the sun, the music of the spheres, the procession of space-time, the merry-go-round of *'sṛṣṭi'* and *'pralaya'*, the rhythm of life in the body with the systole and diastole and the dance of *saṅkalpa* and *vikalpa* in the brain with its dialectic alternations of *pūrvapakṣa* and *siddhānta*. All the dynamic movements in the starry heavens above and the supra-mental attractions of lovers with all the romance of poetry and music below reveal the cosmic *līlā* of love of the eternal in the temporal process. In *Ānandatāṇḍava, Śrī Naṭarāja, the erstwhile Bhikṣāṭana,* the centre alone is everywhere and the circumference nowhere. The sceptic and the cynic have a stony heart and are not moved by the mystic *Bhikṣāṭana form and His Dance* in which *Brahmarasa* or Love itself is the play, the Hero and the actors as the two sided and many-sided Love, (where we may add, the Tragedy of the fallen souls of *Ṛṣis* is converted into this comedy of their Love).[33]

XI

ĀRŪRAR AS HIMSELF AND AS THE LADY-LOVE :

In our saint's poetry, we find that the speeches of the damsels of *Dārukavana* occur very often which drove us to the conclusion that the *Bhikṣāṭana* form was the basic motif of his poems. The *Āḻvārs* very often forgot themselves and sang as *gōpīs* or women madly in love with God. In a similar way our poet probably feels that the outpourings of his heart fit better and make good poetry when cast in the mould of the speeches of the damsels of *Dārukavana*. It is not that he is always conscious of it. In the white heat of love this motif comes to him as a matter of course. In the 36th *hymn,* he definitely says that he sings like the women in love with God. But in other *hymns,* this motif peeps in, in spite of himself. He is sometimes referring to his own autobiography as a man but even there, in spite of himself this motif is trying to get the upper hand of him as may be seen in the *Tirunākaikkārōṇam hymn.*[34] This clearly proves what the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators have asserted, that the *'Peṇpēccu'* the speech of the lady-love is the real speech of the soul. Therefore, there is no contradiction in these two trends. As the *Vaiṣṇavite* commentators point out, the *Āḻvārs* start singing in *'Tāṉāṉa taṉmai', i.e.,* as

33. *ibid. pp.* 308-309.
34. 7:46:7.

themselves as men but in the white heat of their passion for God, they lose themselves and sing in *'Piṟar'* or *'Pirāṭṭiyāṉa taṉmai'*, *i.e.* as the lady-love. In the *Āḻvār's* songs the whole of a *hymn* is either in *'Tāṉāṉa taṉmai* or *Pirāṭṭiyāṉa taṉmai'*. But in *Ārūrar's* poems (as is often the case in *Appar's* poems) even within a particular *hymn,* these two trends are found, thus showing that the *Pirāṭṭiyāṉa taṉmai* is trying to come to the forefront. We have read the *hymns Nos.* 8, 9, 11, 18, 26, 32, 33, 36, 40, 42, 43, 49, 66, 84, 88, 91 and 94 in this light. In all these *hymns* we have the motif of the *Bhikṣāṭana* form.

The damsels in love with the *Bhikṣāṭana* form are innocent women forgetting their 'self' at the bewitching beauty of the Lord and becoming His lovers in the transcendental stage. *Ārūrar* probably has the same experience of the Lord. In the speeches of these damsels there is a child-like innocence. They play and laugh in the presence of the Lord, full of humour, enriched by their childish fright and wonder. The real concern for the Lord and the sympathy with His beggary, show that they are more concerned with Him than with themselves.

But saints are not always happy. Every one of them has undergone the suffering of the dark chamber of separation and desolation. For, it is this purgation which purifies the soul, so that it may blossom into God-head. It is in such moments of desolation that the mystics speak the language of sex. Despair and desolation characterise the love song called 'the *neytal'* in *Tamiḻ*. The symbology of this sex poetry we have described in our study of the *hymn* No. 37.[35] We have not included this *hymn* No. 37 amongst the *Bhikṣāṭana hymns* referred to above; for, it stands unique as the song of the soul of *Ārūrar* as the beloved bride of the Lord. His embrace continuing as a sweet remembrance, is soon realized as something of a distant past, with the consequent feeling of desolation. But the lady-love cannot forget the Lord; her body becomes emaciated and she remains sleepless. In the hope of meeting the Lord she makes a last attempt to live; but the physical frame cannot bear the strain and the mind becomes bitter. Still she is not hard on Him, though the body refuses to co-operate with her. No longer the clothes or the bangles can stay on her body which becomes anaemic losing

35. *Vol. III.*

its colour. Her mind recounts to her the love-story, the sight of Him, the flaring up of her love and that fire of love consuming away the body, when all through these stages, she has no desire, no power, no relation except the Lord, during all this quest of her prose, the quest of her poetry and the final quest of her silence. Finally comes a dream or a hope where she enjoys His presence praises Him, embraces and becomes one with Him. Thus we see the poet burning away all his fleshy feelings and becoming pure and whole to become identified or to be in communion with God. The last *hymn*[36] describes to us the final union in allegoric language.

XII

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN AND THE FINAL UNION:

The *Purāṇic* mysticism of *Ārūrar* studied in the previous chapter agrees with his artistic mysticism, bridal mysticism, ethical and spiritual mysticism studied in this part. The *Kāpāli, Bhikṣāṭana* and *Naṭarāja* are important conceptions from this point of view. To many of us in the struggle for existence, world or Nature appears red in tooth and claw. It is a never ending wheel of *karma,* ever moving and crushing us. It looks as though it is cutting away our head when going wrong and is still allowing us to live as though to get for more of our blood. It chases us like the Hound, wounds us, allows us to escape, but still pursues us, like the cat playing with the mouse. The wounds are inflicted. The Hound pursues with its unrelenting steadiness. This is the *Kāpāli,* the Hound of Heaven, appearing as this world and the *karma.* We think we can escape; but the Hound pursues us dancing frightfully in that graveyard of bones and corpses when in this race, mind finally turns away from the evanescent world to the permanent values, the eternal verities of life. Then dawns the knowledge in the mind of the soul that the Hound of Heaven is really our beloved Lord, pursuing us because of his mad attachment to us unable to bear our separation; He stands naked wanting nothing but our love, performing this great *Tapas* of a hunting race for attaining us. The *Kāpāli* appears as a *Bhikṣāṭana,* the bewitching beauty. He crosses our way making assaults on our feminine modesty; the erstwhile wounds are His attempts at forceful abduction. They

36. *H.* 100.

are really the imprints of His kisses. The souls are bewitched by His beauty and follow Him. Mind is purified, egoism disappears, there is no thought of the 'I'; the Soul has no other existence apart from the Lord. The *karmas* are completely washed out, the wounds are healed, and in worshipful prayer they are treasured as marks and signs of His love even by Him. "Ah, How my sins have become your feast?" — cries the lady-love — *"Pātakamē cōṟu paṟṟiyavā"*.[37] This is *Ārūrar's* theory of Grace — *"Kuṟṟam ceyyiṉum kuṇameṉak karutum koḷkai"*;[38] *"Kuṟṟamē ceyiṉum kuṇameṉak koḷḷum koḷkai"*.[39] The world and the egoistic soul with all the *karmas* are thus transcended.

All this is not felt to be the victory of the Soul but the victory of the love of the Lord, His *Aṣṭavīra* (the eight heroic deeds). There is no more death; Death has been conquered. There is no more lust; *Kāma* has been burnt away into ashes, to be besmeared with as the purest love. The three *malas* or *tripuras* have no effect on us, for they have been burnt away to come into the service of the Lord and to become His divine art. The egotism (*Dakṣa*), the blind pride (*Andhaka*), the power (*Cakra*), intoxication (*Jalandhara*) are all dead. Where can all these be when the soul has no other thought but the Lord, when it is lost in Him and is one with Him?

There is a feeling of complete identity in this communion, the smaller self dying to live as the Higher Self. It is then the experience of *Naṭarāja*, the universal bliss, first, a dance of *Ardhanāri*, a dance of communion, then ultimately the dance of the One where there is no feeling of duality.

37. *Tiruvācakam-Tōṇōkkam*: 7.
38. 7:55:4.
39. 7:69:6.

CHAPTER III

THE FINAL GOAL

I

THE LAST VERSES:

As already noted the last verses of the various *hymns* give the results which will flow from a recitation of the *hymns*. Sometimes these are described as happiness of power and sovereignty.[1] Especially in *hymns* like No. 2, which are addressed to the kings, this is the tempting message. Those who recite the *hymn* will become the slaves of God, but be the Lords of the residents of Heavens and kings of the ancient Royal families ruling all the higher regions above the rulers of the world.[2] In another place our poet states that even if these reciters descend from the Heavens they are sure to live as the Lords of Provinces or Spheres — "*Maṇṭalanāyakar*".[3] *Hymn* 3 speaks of their becoming kings on elephants ruling all the Heavens. The spiritual significance of this conception is explained below under our study of *Śivalōka*. Sometimes the results flowing from recitation are referred to in terms of mental happiness and power and as freedom from miseries, though these also have their spiritual significance.[4] Our poet speaks of Lordship over the three worlds.[5] He also speaks of the body suffering from the heat of pain and misery becoming cool with bliss[6] which is the way of expressing happiness in the tropics. These *Bhaktas* are higher than the people of the world.[7] Our poet also refers to fame as a result, the fame which spreads with the world. This may at the first instance mean ordinary worldly fame but when '*Pukal̲*' is interpreted according to *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* as something immortal as opposed to our mortal fame, it must be the fame of the *Bhaktas* and *Muktas*.[8]

1. *H.* 23, 35, 40, 46, 67, 69, 79.
2. *H.* 40.
3. *H.* 84.
4. *H.* 22.
5. *H.* 27.
6. *H.* 31.
7. *H.* 51.
8. *H.* 71, 73.

II

UNIVERSAL SALVATION:

Other *hymns* speak of reaching the Heavens which in the context probably refers to the highest spiritual state of *'Mukti'*. The highest sphere is called *Śivalōka,* the sphere of *Śiva* the Good;[9] *Paralōkam,* the ultimate spiritual sphere;[10] *Rudralōkam,* the sphere of *Rudra,* the destroyer;[11] *Amaralōkam,* the deathless sphere;[12] *Paragati,* the ultimate goal;[13] *Naṉṉeṟi ulaku,* sphere of Good path;[14] *Tavalōkam,* the sphere of self sacrifice, where the smaller self is destroyed;[15] *Mukti,* freedom.[16]

In some places our poet speaks of the followers reaching this highest spheres along with *Tēvakaṇam.* This may suggest that *Śivalōka* is only a *Padamukti.*

But it is better to interpret this verse as referring to some of the souls going to the higher regions through what the *Upaniṣads* call the *Dēvayāna* for enjoying the sublimated pleasures and thereafter attaining *'Mukti'* along with others. It is also called *Vāṉulaku,* the world of ether or spirit, the High Heavens, *Imaiyōr Ulaku,* sphere of those who wink not, *Viṇṇulaku,* the Heavens upon the ether or sky — if they do not mean the *Svarga.* For, it is possible some of these terms may refer to the Higher worlds which we cannot say, *Ārūrar* never believed in. He refers to them in no unmistakable terms. *Śivajñānabōdham*[17] speaks of the aspirant reaching *Tāvalōkam* (the various heavens reached as a result of *Tapas* as distinguished from *siddhi*) and then coming after the exhaustion of good *karmas* to take a birth for attaining *siddhi.* Even *Muktas* sometimes attain lordship over these higher worlds.

There are certain evolved souls who refuse to reach salvation unless all are saved and these are said to occupy at the dictate of the Lord, and in the service of the Lord, the places of leader-

9. *H.* 9, 10, 21, 25, 32, 42, 47.
10. *H.* 18, 24, 28, 98.
11. 7:73:1.
12. *H.* 59, 74, 78.
13. *H.* 54, 64.
14. *H.* 61.
15. *H.* 97.
16. *H.* 56.
17. 8:1:1.

ship in the various higher regions and they finally reach salvation along with all others. The reference to rulership, *'Imaiyōr ulaku eytutal'*[18] *'Vāṉattuyartal'*[19] *'Vāṉulaku āḷal'*,[20] *'Vāṉōrulaku āḷal'*,[21] *'Maṇṭala Nāyakar'*,[22] *'Amarulakamāḷpavar'*,[23] *'Viṇṇavarkkaracē'*,[24] *'Viṉ muḻutu āḷal'*,[25] *'Amarulakāḷal'*,[26] *'Vāṉakam āṇṭaṅkiruppar'*,[27] *'Viyaṉ mūvulaku āḷal'*[28]—have to be interpreted in these terms.

The final stage of *Mukti* is also spoken as attaining worshipped by the heavens, the feet of the Supreme Lord.[29] It is devoid of all miseries for us and our people, which term also has to be interpreted in terms of universal salvation.[30]

Our poet calls the higher state of Heaven or *Viṇṇulakam* wherefrom there is no return *'Pērā Viṇṇulakam'*[31] reminding us of — *"Ārā iyaṟkai avā nīppiṉ annilaiyē pērā iyaṟkai tarum"*;[32] *"Kaṟṟīṇṭu meypporuḷ kaṇṭār talaippaṭuvar maṟṟīṇṭu vārā neṟi*[33] of *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* and *"Na Sa punar āvarttatē"* of *Brahmasūtra"*.[34] Our poet makes this clear by stating that there is no going or coming there; it is being in the flood of bliss — *"Pōkkillai varavillaiyāki iṉpaveḷḷattuḷ iruppārkaḷ iṉitē"*.[35]

This idea of bliss is often emphasized.[36] It is a stage of faultless perfection devoid of all the influences of *karma*,[37] *Poy* (un-

18. *H.* 93.
19. *H.* 86.
20. 7:35:10.
21. 7:23:10.
22. 7:84:10.
23. *H.* 74.
24. *H.* 69.
25. *H.* 2, 3.
26. *H.* 46, 74.
27. *H.* 79
28. *H.* 27.
29. *H.*, 19, 34, 36, 45, 60.
30. *H.*, 22, 23, 48, 49.
31 7:26:10.
32. *Kuṟal*, 370.
33. *Kuṟaḷ*, 366.
34. *iv.*, 555.
35. 7:68:10.
36. *H.*, 97.
37. *H.*, 26.

truth),[38] delusion, old age, *etc.*,[39] birth and death.[40] This is also spoken of as the *'gati'* of the Dancing Lord — *"Naṭam naviṉṟāṉ-pārakati"*[41] and *'Parakati'*[42] and *Mukti* is the result of *Paragati* — *"Muttiyāvatu Parakatippayaṉē"*,[43] which is otherwise described as *"Naṭanaviṉṟāṉpāṟ katiyum eituvar Patiyavark katuvē"* — 'that is their abode or city'.[44] *Pati* is where one goes — the refuge — the final resort — the goal. It is clear that the final goal is in God being in final communion or attaining identity with Him — *"Para-ṉoṭu kūṭutal"*.[45] It is also clear that this spiritual experience is spoken of in terms of a spatial simile as abode or city or world. The idea of its being the supreme goal is expressed in terms of height or vertical ascension — *"Vāṉattūyarvār"*;[46] *"Varaiyiṉār vakai ñālam āṇṭavarkkum tāmpōy vāṉavarkkum talaivarāy niṟ-paravar tāmē"*;[47] *"Mēlaiyār mēlaiyār mēlārē"* — 'Up above those who are over the Highest'.[48] *Mukti* is specifically described as the fruition of *Paragati* or the ultimate goal as shown above — *"Mut-tiyāvatu parakatippayaṉē"*.[49]

III

BHAKTI AS MUKTI :

Still other *hymns* refer to the worship and the company of the *Bhaktas* and to one becoming a *Bhakta* as the immediate result of the recitation of the *hymns* — *"Pātam paṇivār"*;[50] *"Aṉpar āvār"*;[51] *"Aṭi paṇivār"*;[52] *"Pattarāy"*.[53] Probably, when the poet speaks of the reciters reaching God or coming near Him, *"Nātaṉai naṇuku-tal"*,[54] he means this kind of approach through worship or *bhā-*

38. *H.*, 45.
39. *H.*, 60.
40. *H.*, 70.
41. 7:62:10.
42. 7:54:10.
43. 7:64:10.
44. 7:62:10.
45. 7:88:10.
46. 7:86:10.
47. 7:40:11.
48. 7:96:10.
49. 7:64:10.
50. 7:7:11.
51. 7:39:11.
52. 7:52:10.
53. 7:56:11.
54. 7:8:10.

vanā. Or, he may mean that they reach the sphere of the Lord. *Bhakti* is preferred to *Mukti* and the singing of the poems in the company of the *Bhaktas* is itself looked upon as the Bliss of *Mōkṣa.*[55] So is the bliss of their speech[56] though this may appear as blabbering to others.[57] Thus, these describe the state of the *Jīvanmuktas.*

IV

SPIRITUAL PROGRESS:

There are other *hymns* which speak of mental and spiritual progress. *Kāmam* (Lust), *Vekuḷi* (Anger) and *Mayakkam* (*Mōham*) are the three great veils or *'malas'* all born of ignorance or darkness (*Iruḷ*). There is confusion and hesitation as a result of this. A recitation of his *hymns* cures us, according to our poet of these defects, our mental hesitations and confusions — *"Taṭumāṟṟilar".*[58] The other stages reached in mental and spiritual progress are also described as the results flowing from such a recitation. The path of *Tapas* — *"Tava neṟi"* is attained.[59] All faults are removed in this progress.[60] The worship of the *Bhaktas* is also one of the means of attaining spiritual perfection, an aim to be aspired for;[61] and the poet states that those who recite his *hymns* will be the great *Gurus* above his own head,[62] our saviours.[63] The reciters attain the knowledge of the real *"Tattuva ñānikaḷ";*[64] they are the embodiments of virtue — *"Puṇṇiyar".*[65] These references do not refer to the beginning stage of the path of *Bhakti* but to the final stage where looking back one sees all these marks of perfection.

There are other *hymns* which speak of the removal of the sin and all kinds of miseries: *'Pāvam';*[66] Miseries —*"Tuṉpam';*[67] *'Iṭum-*

55. 7:29:10; 7:39:11; 7:76:10.
56. 7:44:10.
57. 7:72:11.
58. 7:4:10; 7:43:11.
59. 7:13:11; 7:74:10.
60 7:26:10.
61. 7:81:10.
62. 7:41:10.
63. 7:75:10.
64. 7:43:11.
65. 7:83:10.
66. 7:5:10; 7:11:10; 7:15:10; 7:16:11; 7:53:10.
67. 7:58:10; 7:48:10; 7:92:10; 7:94:10.

pai';[68] *'Iṭar'*;[69] *'Allal'*;[70] *'Naṭalai'*;[71] *'Ev (vam)'*;[72] *'Naraippu'*;[73] *'Mūppu'*;[74] *'Tirai'*;[75] *'Tuyar'*;[76] *'Viṉai'*;[77] *'Piḻaippu'*;[78] *'Kuṟṟam'*[79] and *'Iṭumpai'*.[80] These, though mentioned separately, are the effects of *Karma;* and the freedom from these is the final mark of a freed soul before it is drowned in the Bliss of the Absolute.

V

MEANS AS THE END:

The final goal has thus been more often spoken of as an escape from *Karma,* sin and misery. This is what the *Śaiva Siddhānta* calls *Pāśakṣaya,* the destruction of the fetters. If the soul is sufficiently evolved, the subsequent stages of *Daśakārya* occur all at once. Therefore this *Pāśakṣaya* is the real turning point and that is spoken of as the negative aspect of *Mōkṣa.*

Sometimes the poet, we saw, speaks of the happiness of the goal as the happiness of being in the company of the followers of God and singing His praises. He has worshipped God through poetry, singing poems in the company of *Bhaktas* and not in the isolation of his chamber of meditation. The social aspect of religion appealed to *Ārūrar.* He felt the divine bliss overpowering him when he sang his songs with the others in the temples he visited. It gave him the joy of universal salvation. In such moments there arises in the minds of saints that universal love which prefers to their own salvation, the holy life in the service of God in the midst of the people of this universe. *Bhakti* itself

68. 7:58:10.
69. 7:22:10; 7:43:11.
70. 7:16:11; 7:20:10.
71. 7:60:10; 7:69:11.
72. 7:31:10.
73. 7:60:10; 7:69:11.
74. 7:60:10; 7:69:11.
75. 7:69:11.
76. 7:82:10.
77. 7:17:11; 7:19:11; 7:26:10; 7:31:10; 7:55:10; 7:80:10; 7:85:10; 7:89:11; 7:91:10; 7:99:11.
78. 7:26:10.
79. 7:50:10.
80. 7:58:10.

thus becomes *Mukti* to them. This is what *Cēkkiḻār* sings when he sings of these great saints in general:

> "*Kūṭum aṉpiṉil kumpiṭalē aṉṟi*
> *Vīṭum vēṇṭā viṟaliṉ viḷaṅkiṉār*".[81]

VI

PADAMUKTI:

But that does not mean that there is no other goal. That goal is described, therefore, in negative terms as the absence of misery, imperfection and *karma* and in positive terms as happiness. The indescribable has to be expressed as usual in similes. Our poet talks of going up as though vertically to higher worlds of happiness beyond the great beyond. Here, the words are not to be taken literally as an ascension through space. The mental states of progressive spirituality are often referred to as spheres or worlds or *bhūmis*. The highest world will then be the highest spiritual experience, the experience of the Absolute. It is true that there are others who will interpret these literally as higher heavens where the freed souls go and live. This is called '*Padamukti*' but this is not considered to be the goal by any of the well known systems of *Śaivism*, which all speak of *Sāyujya* though they may be differing in their interpretation of that word, some taking it in the sense of identity and others in the sense of union.

VII

LABELS:

The ultimate goal is the non-dual experience of the Absolute. There is no feeling of separation or duality. The final feeling is "*Nāṉāya Paraṉ*"[82] and our poet calls God, "*Irumpuṇṭa nīr*",[83] the water sprinkled on the hot fire of an iron ball becoming one with it. This describes the spiritual experience of non-duality. But the question still remains whether in spite of this unity of experience, there is existentially any duality. Some schools of *Śaivism* are monistic and assert that the erstwhile soul and God are in the ultimate stage One, all the veils or illusion of duality having been removed. This is today the theory held by the northern *Śaivism* of Kashmere. It is said by some that it was this kind of *Śaivism* that was also found in the days of *Tirumūlar;* but the *Śaiva Siddhānta* holds that there is existential dualism and expe-

81. *Tirukkūṭṭacciṟappu, verse* 8.
82. 7:38:4.
83. 7:58:1.

riential non-dualism. It is difficult to say to what school of *Śaivism Ārūrar* belonged; perhaps he belonged to none. He saw the truth everywhere and, therefore, did not join in the mutual recrimination. *Kāpāla, Pāśupata, Māvrata* are names of systems of *Tāntric Śaivism* and our poet refers to these names. *Mahēndravarmaṉ* in his farce *Mattavilāsaprahasanam* describes in detail the *Kāpālikas* making them the butt of his ridicule. *Ārūrar*, by no stretch of imagniation, can be called a *Kāpālika*. Temples named *Karōṇam* after the birthplace of *Lākulisa* are also sung by our poet.[84] But he has no preference for this philosophy either. His references are restricted to emphasizing the general love for God. Love, Service, Self-sacrifice, destruction of the separatist 'I' and the blossoming of the Higher Self in its place — these are what he is concerned with. It may be argued that he means more than this and that he describes the peculiar modes of worship of the varying sects. But it must be pointed that he does not describe the worshippers but God Himself in this way.

As for the philosophical terms relied on by the *Śaiva Siddhānta* school — terms like *Paśu, Pati, Pāśam, Malam, Āṇavam, Karma* and *Māyā* — our poet does not refer to all of them. *Paśupati* occurs as the name of God.[85] *Malam* and *Karma* occur; but they are common to all Indian philosophies.[86] *Pāśam* is mentioned by our poet but not beyond doubt in the technical sense of *Śaiva Siddānta*.[87] *Māyā* and *Āṇavam* do not occur unless we take '*Māyam*'[88] as *Māyā*. This attempt at labelling him is futile; for, he is the poet of harmony and universality, though he came in the best tradition of real *Śaivism* which does not lose itself in the mirage of dialectics. The *Śaivite* School was connected with the schools of Logic and that probably saved *Śaivism* from becoming a prey to emotionalism.

VIII

NON-DUALISM THROUGH DUALISM:

Ārūrar talks the language of dualism but this cannot make him a dualist because it is only through a dualism of worship,

84. See *hymn* 46, *Nākaikkārōṇam*.
85. *Paśupati*, 7:58:5.
86. *Malam*, 7:35:8; 7:82:6; *Karma* as *viṉai* is used in several places.
87. *Pāśam*, 7:82:6.
88. 7:95:7.

monistic experience is reached; as such this kind of talk of dualism is inevitable. But when describing the ultimate goal he speaks of the experience being non-dual. He is not very much concerned with the philosophical disquisitions; for, he is more concerned with the saving of the soul and the final experience about which all are agreed, that it is non-dual, a mystic experience of unity. It is therefore, difficult to speak in more definite terms of our poet so as to enable the world of warring philosophers to label him a monist or a qualified monist, though we can safely assert that he is not a thorough-going dualist. On the basis of the metaphor of '*Irumpuṇṭa nīr*',[89] the monist claim *Ārūrar* as of their fold. *Śivajñānasvāmikaḷ* understands this simile as illustrating the mutual *laya* of the soul and God.[90]

IX

HARMONY:

When the poet, as a mystic, has emphasized the harmony of all religions in his spiritual experience, it will not be fair to get ourselves lost in the conflicts of philosophers. In this country all the phrases and similes relied upon by one set of philosophers have been re-interpreted to suit their own theories by others. The *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhagavatgīta* have all been claimed as peculiarly their own philosophical works by the differing schools of thought. *Ārūrar's* poems are revered as the *Vēda* in *Tamiḻ* and naturally each philosopher will claim it as voicing forth his own theory. The commentary on *Śivajñāna Bōdham* by *Śivajñānasvāmikaḷ* gives any number of schools of *Śaivism* which can in one way or other be identified with one or other of the conflicting philosophies of the world. Perhaps mutual conflicts of these philosophies, at the same time claiming these books of universal vision and experience as peculiarly their own, prove that *Ārūrar's* poems like the other works are true for all, because ultimately there is this fundamental unity of mystic experience underlying all these systems of thought. Has not *Ārūrar* himself given out this great truth in *"Aṟiviṉāl mikka aṟuvakaic camayam avvavark kāṅkē āraruḷ purintu?"*.[91]

89. 7:58:1.
90. *Śivajñānabodanam—Mapaṭiyam*, p. 522, under *sūtram* 10.
91. 7:55:9.

CONCLUSION

These studies reveal to us *Ārūrar* rising before us with an integrated personality, if one may use that term, like a fully blossomed flower, fresh and fragrant, soft and sweet, lovely in colour and beautiful in form. He is a learned *Brahmin* steeped in the lore of his age, prince and warrior, statesman and politician — a companion of the king '*Tampirāṉ Tōḻar*' — one who has known the splendour of royal life — one of the fortunate few blessed with the wealth of learning and riches — though not with a political success to the end. He has known adversity and misery, physical, material and political, both in the domestic and public life but then like the ordinary fire that gives temper to the iron, this fire of suffering shaped him well and made him firm and useful. He lives in an age of political wars and turmoils, dynastic revolutions and depressing famines; but undaunted he goes through this life, making himself useful in one way or another. It is his proper attitude and not the ephemeral success that is important.

His domestic life is full of love and service — he is an ardent lover, a dutiful husband, a loving father. It is not all smooth sailing but he is proud of his wives — the very gift of God as he looked upon them, and the children who are spiritually great. He lives in the presence of God and looks upon everything and every act as proceeding from and inspired by God — the material wealth, food and luxuries, the help of others, his very wives and their enjoyment. He is a poet and philosopher and as such looks at the world in a discerning mood which has harmonized conflicting feelings and experiences as a living art and as the beautiful expression of God's Grace. He feels he is ordained for the service of God and his loving and sympathetic heart goes to all; he goes about singing his musical compositions of great *Tamiḻ* Poetry from temple to temple creating thereby a band of *Śaiva* devotees, full of love and sacrifice. He is a proud prince to start with, but he becomes humble to take pride in the service of God and *Śaivites*. Miseries he has known but the spiritual progress and mystic experience all through his rich and varied life, make him feel certain of salvation — no more death, no more sufferings, no more sins. This perfection reached is not a negation but an enrichment.

He has been greatly moved by the lives of the great saints of the *Tamiḻ* land; he walks in the footsteps of *Campantar* and *Appar,* his two great illustrious leaders. He realizes the Grace of the Lord and he is all kindness. He sings in his inimitable but simple *Tamiḻ* for the people at large; his music and poetry are soul-stirring. The crest-fallen *Tamilian* is inspired with a new hope and the certain Grace of the Lord. The Lord is the Lord of *Tamiḻ,* fond of this Southern corner of the earth. He is proud of the *Tamiḻ* language and its culture. Has not the *Tamiḻ* country produced a galaxy of saints, so many lode stars in the darkness of our worldly life, leading us all to the perfection of Śiva?

His sincere nationalism has thus a pragmatic value to the *Tamilians* who cannot but forget their ancient glory and history in the stress and strain of political upheavals and foreign invasions. The poet brings out a harmony of the new culture of the life divine. It is, therefore, possible for him to escape the narrow parochialism and to become the citizen of the world — nay the citizen of the universe looking upon the whole community of the living beings — the plant life, the animal life, the bird life and the human life — with all their cruelties and horrors — as one happy family of God. That is his great universal vision.

The *Āgamas* are coming to prominence. This spiritual way appeals to the common man and to the spiritually great. The temple is the real community centre. Rituals have not become dead formalities; they are as yet the satisfying concrete expressions of the inner urge — sublime and reverential. The social worship becomes poetry and music in the hands of our poet. Royal pomp and power, wealth and grandeur sublimated as it were in the service of God, flow as festivals and temple, full of divine Grace — a wonderful way of converting private and individual property into public and social property through a spiritualizing power. The ritual is the loving communion with God and the poems of *Ārūrar* give expression to this experience of his; we have a glorious vision of this religion through this coin of vantage — his poems.

His religion aims at this spiritual perfection of man and the divine sublimation of matter. There, God is everywhere both within and without and in this process every speech is a prayer, every act a worship and every thought a meditation — *Sahaja niṣṭā.*

The common man enjoys his folklore which has been by this time enriched by the *Purāṇas*. Our poet in his appeal to the common man speaks this language of mythology, at the same time vivifying them with divine life. Their spiritual significance thrills the common man through poetry and music. Horrid stories are re-interpreted and represented as concrete expressions of God's love — the love that God who is the energizing dynamism of dance and the very '*Śānti*' and silence of the unchanging Absolute. *Bhikṣāṭana* form becomes an art motif of his poetry of love. If *Kailāsanātha* Temple is the frozen music of this divine mythology, *Ārūrar's* poetry is the free flow of this divine music.

The *hymns* reveal a progression — a history of his spiritual struggle and victory. They write as it were his autobiography and his poems form thus a lyrical outburst. It is no more individual; it is universalized as poetry appealing to the heart of all men hankering after something—beyond human reach something sublime, in short God, the Almighty. His religion is thus not a creed or a dogma but a living faith; his life itself becomes Religion. From this point of view the poems assume an epic grandeur—the wars and victories of the soul. God's Grace transforms this epic into a drama — a divine drama of His Love. Creation becomes the magic transformation of souls into God. Nature, full of beauty, becomes the background, the theatre, the temple of God but at the same time showing the divine glimpses which reveal, that, there being nothing but God this Nature is in a way God, though He transcends it. This universe of space, time and causation is but the poetic harmony of the complications and resolutions of this divine drama. That is the vision of the Object — the philosophy of Nature or *Pāśa*.

As for the Subject — the Soul, we have the philosophy of Soul. We ascend with our poet the gradations of its real significance till it sheds all its seeming faults and becomes one with the true light and love of the Absolute. This is the plot of the drama with all its complications and ultimate resolutions by *deus ex machina*. Our poetic spiritual progress stands revealed. His mystic experience becomes significant, viewed in the light of the experiences of other mystics of the world. The law of *karma* is seen from various ascending levels as the law of *Dharma* and the law of Love based on the Grace of God. There are here Purgation, Illumination and Bliss.

Illumination and Bliss are expressed in terms of love — in terms of the divine story of the loving couple — the Soul and God. Here comes the Philosophy of God. The *'Akappāṭṭu'* so beautifully put into proper form by the *Caṅkam* poets, and *Tiruvaḷḷuvar* comes in handy as the only vehicle of this kind of divine experience and thought. *Bhikṣāṭana* form as an art motif becomes important. *Ārūrar* and God become one in love — a spiritual communion and identity. But this is not a love which loses its ethical grandeur. *Ārūrar's* is also an ethical mysticism. This final goal is expressed in so many ways as may be easily understood by the common man who is the great concern of our poet. There is possibly a suggestion of universal salvation, some kind of *Bōdhisattva* idea. One cannot escape using spatial and temporal metaphors in describing this final goal. *Bhakti* itself is *Mukti;* the very company of the saints is paradise full of their songs. But the final stage is communion or identity with *Śiva;* there is no misery, no fetters — it is all perfection — there is also no sin. Thus, in our poet, Nature mysticism, Religious mysticism, Art mysticism, Bridal mysticism and Ethical mysticism become one in revealing the divine perfection of his integrated personality — a personality which becomes the Absolute in that very process of perfection.

The Religion and Philosophy of *Ārūrar* enriched by the other studies reveal the full stature of our poet. It has not been possible to label him as belonging to any particular Philosophy. Perhaps we are fortunate, his harmony has a lasting value to the generations to come. His God, he is fond of addressing as *Śiva.* In that sense he is a *Śaivite* but not as the *Kāpālikas, Pāśupatas* and others have thought of it. *Śaivism* has assumed a rich significance through his life and through his poems as the great divine path of love — the golden path of all the mystics.

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